MARATHA NAVY:

AN ENQUIRY INTO ITS LIMITATIONS AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

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DECLARATION

It is hereby declared that this Ph. D Thesis titled **"Maratha Navy: An Enquiry into Its Limitations and Contemporary Challenges"** is based on the work carried out by the undersigned from July 2004 to June 2009 under the guidance of (Late) Prof. Sushma J Varma and Prof. Deepak S Gaikwad of Dept of History, University of Pune. This work has not been submitted for the award of any other degree/diploma/title of this or any other University or other institutes of higher learning. It is further declared that the references obtained from previous works of others, have been clearly indicated and duly acknowledged in this thesis.

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Abbreviations

EF	: English Factories [Relevant Volumes] (ed.) Foster William, Oxford.
ERS	: English Records on Shivaji, (ed.) Paranjape, B.G., Poona.
Forrest (Home Series)	: Selections from the Letters, Dispatches and other State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat, (Home Series), by G. W. Forrest.
Forrest (Maratha Series)	: Selections from the Letters, Dispatches and other State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat, (Maratha Series), by G. W. Forrest.
Kaifiyat, Yadis	: Selections From The Government Records In The Alienation Office Poona; Selected by G. C. Vad and Edited by P. V. Mawjee & D. B. Parasnis, Poona.
Rajniti	: *Ramchandrapant Amatya's Rajniti.*
MIS	: *Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane.*
Sanads and Letters	: Selections From The Government Records In The Alienation Office Poona; Selected by G. C. Vad and Edited by P. V. Mawjee & D. B. Parasnis, Poona.
SKPS	: *Sambhaji Kalin Patra-Saar Samgraha*. Poona.
SPS	: *Shiva Kalin Patra-Saar Samgraha*. Poona.
SPD	: *Selection from the Peshwa Daftar*, (ed.) Sardesai, G. S., Bombay.
SSRPD	: *Selection from Satara Raja's and Peshwa's Dairies*, prepared by Rao Bahadur Ganesh Chimanji Vad & edited under the orders of the Deccan Vernacular Translation Society, Poona.

1. INTRODUCTION

I

CONCEPT OF NAVY:

Mankind has shown interest towards the sea either because of anxiety, or for livelihood, or because of compulsions - political, social or economic. The history of seafaring and maritime activities of human kind continues since the past thousands of years and has a profound impact on the development of human civilization. In fact, the foundations of the study of modern geography as we know now, were laid by mariners and represent mainly the sea-farers' point of view and reflect the achievements of the great navigators. In the words of Panikkar, "the beginnings of modern geography were made by the navigators who explored unknown seas, charted new routes and discovered hitherto unknown continents".[1] The importance of the sea and of rivers for transportation-communications-in human history, has guaranteed their strategic importance. Because we use, rather than occupy, the sea, and because the sea - and inland waters - frequently, indeed generally, have been the only practicable medium for strategic exploitation, maritime activities have been a hardy perennial of strategic history.

The term 'maritime activity', connote the activities relating or dealing with matters of commerce or navigation on the sea.[2] It is also connected with seafaring, naval establishment, naval warfare, bordering on the sea etc.[3] It appears, therefore, that all the maritime activities cannot be taken as naval activities. However, there has been a general tendency to use the term navy indiscriminately, whenever matters or activities related to the use of sea or ships (especially during pre-modern times) are referred to. Is it because of our ignorance of the concept of navy, its role, or naval warfare, or is it because of the fact that navy has acquired a more specific and distinguished role in this age of science and technology? We must try to understand, at the very outset, therefore, what actually the terms navy, naval power or naval wars stand for.

Simply stated, **navy** (often **Navy**), in earlier times, meant all ships/boats of a nation, whether for war or commerce, whereas the term navy, in the modern times, designates only such vessels, as are built and maintained specifically for purpose of defense and war, with their crews and organization. A navy, in other words, is the branch of a country's military forces, principally designated for naval warfare - namely lake or ocean-borne combat operations and related functions. It consists of a nation's combat fleet and supporting ships, their personnel, and land bases.[4] The Oxford Companion to Military History illustrates, "navies are the means whereby naval power may be exerted".[5] It further notes "with a strong navy, a term which navalists understood to encompass ships with all their weapons, trained personnel, sufficient bases, and the harbour and industrial facilities to support them, the nation could seek to increase power at sea"[6]. It follows logically, therefore, that the role of a navy is two-fold:

(1) Projection-of-force into areas beyond a country's shores (for example, to protect sea-lanes, ferry troops, or attack other navies, ports, or shore installations; in other words the ***Strategic Offensive role***, and

(2) Forestall and frustrate sea-borne projection-of-force by enemies; in other words the ***Strategic Defensive role***.

Although violence in watery surroundings has been a feature of warfare since the earliest days,[7] the difference it makes to the waging of wars, and to the rise and fall of nations, has only been seriously addressed over the past century or so. Naval warfare first developed whenever humankind conducted fighting from water-borne vessels. A handful of ancient and medieval powers/rulers were able to maintain something like a national navy for long periods, while others assembled squadrons of warships, often privately owned, for particular campaigns, or improvised fleets out of merchant ships carrying soldiers. The earliest recorded specialized warships (as opposed to vessels used for both commerce and raiding) were Phoenician and Greek vessels of the 7th century BC, also known as *Galley*.[8] These were long, narrow wooden vessels powered chiefly by oarsmen, but most of them were fitted with (single) sails too.[9] Like all warships, for nearly 2000 years they used oars for maneuvering in combat and sails for cruising. Generally they had two banks of oarsmen and were fitted with a ram (which distinguished it from other vessels) at the bow to sink the enemy ships by penetrating their hulls at waterline.[10] Catapults were sometimes mounted on warships from 4th century BC onwards and were used to fire missiles or incendiaries, but they were man killers, not ship-smashers.[11] As the galleys were put into action in times of a naval engagement, the usual practice was to start by hurling missiles. The galleys then maneuvered in such a manner that the rams delivered a fatal impact and the ships came alongside the enemy vessel so its occupants could be attacked hand-to-hand. During this process crew tried to board the enemy vessel to fight and capture the enemy. In battle, therefore, both ramming and boarding, or a combination of the two, were the only ways of eliminating vessels, and both literally involved physical contacts between the fighting vessels. This practice continued in this vein through the Middle-Ages until the use of fast troop-carriers for short-range amphibious operations[12] started.

Technological changes were influencing the general conduct of war. The middle age saw the introduction of guns and cannons aboard the ships. The first canon appeared by 1200 AD and by 1450 AD many war galleys had mounted a large fixed canon that could fire over the bow.[13] Such centerline bow guns were soon adopted universally, often flanked by smaller guns. Between the 13th and 16th centuries the commercial trading vessels of Northern Europe evolved into effective warships, with rudders, keels, and complex sails. Shipbuilding activities, therefore, underwent a great transformation. Vessels with deep hulls, unlike the long, low galleys came into existence. They could easily travel on high seas with sail being the chief means of propulsion. Warships were now being designed to accommodate increasing number of guns and cannons which came into wide use after 1500 AD. They soon became dominant around the world because of their increased maneuverability, their load-carrying capacity, and their suitability for carrying cannon. The mass and deck space, required to carry a large number of cannon, made oar-based propulsion impossible, and ships came to rely primarily on sails. The use of sailing vessels, therefore, marked a significant development in the naval warfare.

In this context, it is important to understand that if the canons began to make a fighting ship, the definition of naval force also called for disciplined soldiers and sailors acting at the direction of a central command. Till the 15th century, however, this concept of naval force could not be realized as a large part of the crew consisted of the slaves or the prisoners. The motives were also more personal and economic, rather than purely political. The development of large capacity, sail-powered ships carrying cannons, nevertheless, led to a rapid expansion of European navies. Spain and England built large vessels called *Galleons* and were pre-occupied to compete for the **control of sea**. Naval conflicts/engagements became more frequent and intense, and, as a result, the naval tactics also underwent transformation and refinement. Apart from its maneuverability, a ship's firepower became the main consideration for determining tactics during naval engagements. Naval gunfire support could now be given to land operations also. The basic unit of sea power was the ship of the line or battleship, mounting a minimum of 40 or 50 guns, capable of taking its place in the line of battle. Because warships mounted almost all their guns on the broadside, and were vulnerable to fire from ahead or stern, actions were usually fought in line ahead. This was a strong defensive formation, especially as the ships' means of propulsion (masts and sails) were much more exposed than their hulls, and they were often stopped or disabled before they could come to close quarters.[14] The British fleet emerged victorious (against the Spanish Armada) because of better maneuverability and fire power. The Dutch competed from 1600 AD, but were also brought down under control. From then on the British navy was the strongest in the world.

Another significant aspect, which must be taken note of, is the financial implications of the naval forces. With the adoption of heavy guns, first in galleys in late 15th century, and later in sailing ships, the cost of navies rose markedly. To sustain an effective fleet, it required heavy investment in dockyards and stores etc; it also called for a ceaseless effort of shipbuilding to match the continual decay of wooden ships; and all this would be useless without a large seafaring population to provide skilled crews for the ships. Moreover, nations that have a significant maritime trade economy have also had an incentive to protect their interests with a potent navy. A. T. Mahan was the first military philosopher who identified some (six) fundamental factors which influenced the development of a nation as Sea Power. These were explained in terms of: Geographical

Position, Physical Configuration, Extent of Territory, Size and Character of Population, National Character and the Character of Government/Governmental Institutions.[15] A study of Mahan's work would tend to convince us that apart from the exclusivity in terms of geographical location of a nation, the character (occupation) of population as well as the nature of the government, would help a nation acquire the status of a naval power. This is precisely the reason why, historically, naval powers have been those countries that have a long coastline and a strong economy.

In fact, a nation has to relate to its geographical realities to the formulation of its defence policies and war plans and actual conduct of operations of war. The military evaluation of the geographical realities, in turn, deals with the advantages to be gained and the preparation, which could be involved in pursuit of national objectives. If the terrestrial location (i.e. location in relation to water bodies and land masses) of any state is such that it has access to sea, and is also connected with land, its urge for political expansion, backed by naval power, can be realized. The example of countries like Spain, Portugal, etc. in the past can be cited here which put into use their ***Blue-Water Navy***[16] to accomplish the task of political expansion beyond the territorial limits (of the European continent). At the same time, if the enemy is to be denied any advantages, the countries having a coastline, must deploy naval forces, their ***Brown Water Navy***[17] for defensive purposes. Furthermore, they must strive to fully exploit the hydrographic character of the coastline as well as the character of the ocean in their favour. By hydrographic character, we mean the bays and gulfs, wide estuaries, large lagoons with sufficient entrance which should be well guarded. On the other hand, the oceanic character implies the nature of the favourable tides and presence of sand bars etc which can pose problems to the enemy ships and deny them easy access to the coastal areas. In addition, the coastal islands (located immediately off the coast) could be strategically utilized to keep the movements of the enemy ships under check. In the following pages we will take into consideration the fact that the Marathas, in the 17th-18th century India, not only studied the military advantages of the geographical features of their coastal areas well, but also formulated a naval policy to put up a compatible challenge to the foreign powers.

II

INDIAN TRADITIONS OF SEAFARING:

The Indians too, have a fairly rich tradition of being involved in maritime activities. With the Himalayas in the north, they, for centuries, have depended on sea routes for trade and communication with rest of the world. Vital sea links, therefore, emerged over a period of time - for the exchange of trade, commerce and culture. The Indians, not only constructed seaworthy vessels as ship-builders, but also showed great aptitude as sailors, and for centuries they have traded far and wide by sea.

The archaeological excavations at Lothal in Gujrat have unearthed the remains of a dockyard[18] which comes from the 5000 years old Indus Valley Civilization. The discovery of a Harappan seal portraying anchor leads to the inference that big, ocean going vessels were being used by those people. The ancient Indian texts are also replete with references indicative of maritime activities. **The mythological legends of Rig Veda credits Lord Varuna with knowledge of the ocean routes commonly used by ships and describes naval activities.** One such (and incidentally the most quoted) reference of naval expedition from Rigveda is of Bhujyu. It goes like this – "Rajarshi Tugra was a fovourite with the two Ashwin brothers. Being much harassed by enemies of a foreign land, he sent his son Bhujyu with a strong army to conquer them. The ship, which had hundred oars...went to the middle of the sea, and was driven by the sea (wind?) and wrecked. Thus, Bhuju sent a message to Ashwins for help. Ashwins rescued him with the soldiers in their own ships and brought him home to his father safely in three days and nights."[19] The epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata further provide us with the glimpses of the navigational activities in the ancient past. In Ramayana, when Hanumana was crossing the ocean to Lanka, he is compared to a ship tossed by winds in the high seas.[20] In ancient period, an army was also known as *Chaturangini*, constituting cavalry, elephants, chariots and infantry. But in the great epic of Mahabharata, the chapter *Shantiparvan* describes navy as one of the branches (*anga*) of the army.[21] Though it cannot be asserted from the meager references available in the Holy Scriptures and epics that actual naval battles were fought, yet the knowledge of navigation and seafaring activities of the Indians from the prehistoric times can not, for a moment, be doubted. The scientific knowledge pertaining not only to the construction of various kinds of vessels, but of navigation would have been a pre-condition even if the transportation of the troops via the medium of water was to be done.

We have more authentic and concrete literary evidences, coming from the Jataka stories of the Buddhist literature which further testify to the maritime adventures of the Indians in the age of Mahajanapadas. The textual references are further corroborated by the remains/findings of ancient art and sculpture. One of the sculptures on the Eastern Gateway of No. 1 Stupa of Sanchi represents a canoe made up of rough planks rudely sewn together by hemp or string.[22] The Ajanta paintings (mostly of Cave No. 2) depict ships and boats of various kinds.[23] The influence of the sea on Indian kingdoms continued to grow with the passage of time. In Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, Admiralty figures as a separate department of the war office with a 'Superintendent of Ships' (*navadhyaksha*) to supervise the related matters.[24] In the Gupta Empire also we have reasons to conjecture the existence of naval organization. The great poet Kalidasa of the 'Goldern Era', in his allegorical description of his master's Digvijaya (conquest of directions) clearly refers to the fact that Chandragupta Vikramaditya routed the forces of Banga which were 'ready with their navy' (*Nausadhanodyatan*) and implanted pillars of his fame in the waves of the river Ganges.[25]

Shipbuilding activities as well as developments in navigational methods kept pace with the maritime interests of the Indians throughout its history. In the pre-Mauryan period we have the testimony of Arrian to show that Xathori (*Ksatri*), one of the Punjab tribes, supplied Alexander, during his return voyage, with thirty oared galleys and transport vessels which were all built by them.[26] During the Gupta period, astronomers of repute, Aryabhatta and Varahamihira, having accurately mapped the positions of celestial bodies, developed a method of computing a ship's position from the stars. A crude forerunner of the modern magnetic compass called Matsya Yantra was in use in India around the 4th or 5th Century A.D.[27] **The alignment of the magnetic north had liberated the seamen from hugging the coast and thus giving them confidence to sail across the open sea.** Another contemporary work, the *Yuktikalpataru* of Bhoja, deals with details, the specifications and dimensions of various types of vessels. It also differentiates between the ocean going and inland water ships.[28] Fa-Hien, the famous Chinese traveller, testifies that he travelled from Tamralipti to Ceylon in a boat with 200 men on board and that the journey was completed in 14 days.[29]

Unlike the northern part of India (which was bound by land and mountains, though having many navigable rivers), the southern part of India witnessed ocean going activities on a large scale because of geographical settings. The *Sangam* literature is full of instances that are illustrative of the commercial relations between south India and the foreign countries. The literary as well as archaeological remains indicate towards the use of 'organized fleet' by the rulers for furthering commercial, cultural and political interests. The coins issued by the Andhra rulers Pulamayi and Yagnashri which bear the figure of two-masted ship, *not only indicate towards the seafaring activities but also give us a hint that* they (coins) were apparently issued to commemorate a naval victory.[30] The Aihole Inscription of Pulakeshin-II records that the city of Puri was reduced by a naval invasion with a fleet of hundred vessels of Pulakeshin-II.[31] Later on, the Chola and the Pandya rulers, pressed with the urge for political expansion beyond the sea, **developed a naval power** and were engaged in intermittent warfare with the overseas SriVijaya Kingdom. The Chola kings dispatched great naval expeditions which occupied parts of Burma, Malaya and Sumatra, while suppressing piracy by the Sumatran warlords.[32] It is interesting to note here that, in comparison to the rulers of the north, to whom sea meant little and who were content with the epithet as *Asamudra Kshitiesanam* - rulers whose territory extended to the shores of the sea,[33] the rulers of the southern dynasties appreciated the political importance of the sea and proclaimed maritime dignities/titles; for example the Andhra Kings assumed the title of *Tri Samudradhipati*, i.e., the lord of the eastern, western and the southern ocean; the Zamorins of Calicut, even up to the modern times, described themselves as the sovereigns of the mountains and the sea.[34] It seems that the idea of ruling the seas never entered the minds of the monarchs of the north, while it was a normal conception with the Kalingas, the Cholas and the Pandyas, more because of the geographical setting. This is not to say that the Aryans after their arrival in India did not become familiar with the sea or with maritime navigation, but to them population movements, political power, etc., were bounded by sea. In the south

India, on the other hand, population movements and cultural developments would seem to have been determined by the sea.

The study of history, to some extent, is the study of the politics of the past. It deals with the human decisions that helped to shape the events (of the past) and examine whether the outcome matched the hopes of the decision makers and justified their choice of instrument, naval force being one among those instruments. From the numerous references we have, pertaining to maritime activities and naval engagements of ancient India, the one vital thing which seems to be missing about the policy makers, is the policy to control the sea or to project the State's authority over the sea. In past, navigation seems to be open to all without any discrimination, whatsoever. References of organized or specialized fleet are there in the literature, but the evidences of wars involving such fleets in the sea are rare. Whenever the 'naval wars' are referred to, they turn out to be infantry wars on the land. In other words, the wars for the occupation of territory (overseas) in which boats and ships were used primarily to ferry the troops (infantrymen, elephants, horses or other ammunitions) so as to fight the infantry wars on land, have been generally taken to imply naval wars in the past. Perhaps the ancient-most story depicted in the paintings of Ajanta is that of Vijaya's invasion of Ceylon (probably about 543 B.C. This painting gives ample details not only about the ferrying of the troops involved, but also about the technological competence in ship building activities of that period. Indeed, the incidents of such landings were the very attempts and wars of political expansion where ships and crew participated, but the concept of the control of the sea does not seem to have greatly impressed them. The reasons behind this kind of attitude towards the sea are not too difficult to discern. One of the reasons was the nature of naval warfare. As decisive battles were difficult to achieve by the naval units, and neither did they confer the control of the sea in the way a victory on land might gain territory, raising a purely naval unit was not a gainful proposition. Moreover, the cost of maintaining even a small fleet greatly exceeded those of a large army ashore; they had to be borne over a much longer period to achieve useful results, and they called for the resources of an advanced economy. These must have been the basic considerations for the Indian rulers not projecting their authority or supremacy on the sea. On the other hand, a fleet (with fair amount of navigational skills) could have given these rulers a choice to select any landing point. It could have provided transportation and reinforcement of its troops to a distant destination without fatigue too. But once the landing was effected, it was the infantry that counted. We, therefore, do not come across any real 'naval battle' in strict sense in the Indian past. Sea and navigation remained open for one and all. Even the Arab (The Arabs, in 13th century, succeeded after the breakdown of the Chola rule) mercantile activity in the Arabian Sea had never been political. They were only commercial navigators and were not instruments of any national policy (in contrast to the European powers which appeared on the Indian coast in late 15th century). Trade and commerce, therefore, continued as usual for all the Indians.

During the medieval period, we come across more instances of maritime activities and the use of boats and ships to further political interests (strictly confined to the control of land) of some rulers. There was a spurt in the shipbuilding industry too, which kept pace with the maritime requirements. Nizamuddin Ahmed, the author of *Tabakat-i-Akbari*, while recording Mehmud Ghazni's expedition against the Jats, gives interesting information on this subject. He writes thus, "... (Sultan Mehmud) ordered 1,400 boats to be built, each of which was armed with three firm iron spikes, projecting one from the prow and two from the sides, so that everything which came in contact with them would infallibly be destroyed. In each boat there were 20 archers, with bows and arrows, grenades, and naphtha...Every boat of the Jats that approached the Moslem fleet, when it received the shock of the projecting spikes, was broken and overturned".[35] Another reference by Ziauddin Barani, about the suppression of revolt of Tughril Khan - the governor of Bengal - by Balban, leads us to believe that there was no concept of a 'standing navy' like that of the regular or standing army. Barani writes, "The Sultan...ordered a large number of boats to be collected on the Ganges and the Jamuna...he passed his army over the Sarau (river) in these boats.[36] The same author records that 'barrier breaking' boats were used to ferry an army of one lakh soldiers;[37] and in 1372 A.D., 90,000 cavalry and 480 elephants were ferried to Thatta in boats by Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Contemporary travelers have given important and interesting details about the commercial activities, prominent ports and harbours as well as the technological acumen of the Indians in the field of shipbuilding. In 1292 A.D., Marco Polo described Indian ships as "...built of fir timber, having a sheath of boards laid over

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the planking in every part, caulked with oakum and fastened with iron nails. The bottoms were smeared with a preparation of quicklime and hemp, pounded together and mixed with oil from a certain tree which is a better material than pith." Abdur Razzak, the 15th Century traveler to Bijapur talks about the horse trade via the sea. He also enumerates the hardships involved in navigational activities.[38] Elsewhere, Razzak talks about the ship-building skills being practiced at that time. He observes, "Vessels had planks which were so joined as to resemble a continuous line..."[39] Another account of the early 15th Century describes Indian ships as being built in compartments so that even if one part was damaged, the rest remained intact, enabling the ship to complete her voyage - a forerunner of the modern day sub-division of ships into watertight compartments; a concept then totally alien to the Europeans. The *Ain-i-Akbari* records the activities related to admiralty which looked after the supply of ships, recruitment of suitable personnel, security of river, waterways and port revenue during the reign of Akbar. The Mughals, however, did not appreciate the importance of building a blue water navy and developing sea borne trade and commerce. Nevertheless, shipping and shipbuilding, ocean going and riverine, flourished during the Mughal days.

By the late medieval period, indigenous nautical charts were developed which were comparable to the Portuguese '*Portolanos*'. These were based on systematic observation of coastal configuration, landmarks easily identifiable from the sea at a distance, bearing in terms of horizon star and underwater floor features.[40] Trade and navigation were open to all without discrimination until the coming of the Europeans. The advent of Europeans in the Indian Ocean saw peaceful trade giving way to the use of military force. Though Vasco-Da-Gama's first voyage was peaceful, the succeeding Portuguese venture led by Pedro Alvares Cabral, was accompanied by violent attempts to enforce the Portuguese doctrine of the monopoly of the sea.[41] "The significance of Da-Gama's entry into the Indian sea", writes Panikkar "lies not in the navigational achievements, but in the policy of the Portuguese kings who looked upon the seas as their possession. The 20 guns that '*San Gabriel*' carried, announced the claim of the Portuguese King giving him exclusive dominion in Asia and Africa".[42] The coast of Calicut especially the Zamorins fought hard over a hundred years to keep their coast clear of the Portuguese, but the authority of the native rulers over the waters of the Indian

Ocean vanished from A.D. 1503, when, at the battle of Cochin, the Portuguese general gained what in effect became a decisive victory - a victory more important in its historical consequences.[43] The mighty Mughals under Aurangzeb, though had developed a fleet sufficiently strong to protect their commercial (and political) interests, they were imbued with the drawback of a continental outlook and did not appreciate the importance of the Oceans. They were satisfied to leave the seagoing trade to the Arab intermediaries. The British, the Dutch and the French gradually made their appearance in the Arabian Sea and started asserting their dominance by claiming the control over the sea. On the west coast they successfully challenged the Portuguese monopoly and carved a niche for their mercantile and maritime interests. The change of equations in the Oceanic waters did compel the native rulers to revise their attitude towards the sea. But, by the time the importance of sea came to be recognized by the Indian rulers, it was too late.

Shivaji's domain on the Konkan coast was too near to the Portuguese sphere of activities; hence he immediately undertook the job of construction of a compatible fleet. But by that time the control of the sea had already passed to the Dutch and the British who were comparatively much stronger than the Portuguese. Shivaji's successors too, followed with the same zeal and gave a tough resistance to the Europeans and other players in the Konkan Waters. However, their attempt to assert their political authority over the sea, was gradually eliminated by the more advanced and organized British fleet.

III

THE RISE OF THE MARATHAS IN THE 17TH CENTURY:

The study of Maratha history assumes importance for many reasons. One of the reasons is Shivaji's diligent efforts towards realizing the political aspirations of the Maratha race. Not only did he set the foundations of the Maratha *Swarajya*, but also created a niche for in the teeth of the opposition from the Deccan Sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda and the mighty Mughals as well, who were ever keen to expand their hold in the Deccan area. It must be remembered that the Mughals, at that time, were probably at their best under one of their strongest rulers - Aurangzeb. Shivaji's amazing success, in the course of his relatively shorter span of life, cannot, therefore, be explained satisfactorily except in terms of his military talents. His political ideal of a Maratha *Swarajya* could not have been accomplished without his military genius. He had to create and equip military forces with which he had to fight; he had to fix for them a goal, fire them with a zeal, and lead them from victory to victory so as to 'galvanize a whole people with a sense of national triumph'.[44]

In this process he laid the foundations of Maratha navy. This navy was to be effectively employed as an instrument of the determined Maratha resistance to the European powers as well, since the boundary of the Maratha *Swarajya* extended till the Arabian Sea through the Konkan. The sphere of activity of the Maratha navy was in the coastal waters of the Konkan and was meant, in addition to other duties, to secure the frontiers of the Maratha Swarajaya from the side of the Arabian Sea. The Marathas under Shivaji, by raising a fighting navy, thus, earned the distinction of becoming the first native state to have made sincere efforts to project the political authority/sovereignty of the state over the sea.

To trace the causes of the meteoric rise and subsequent fall of the Maratha power in India is beyond the scope of the present assignment. What matters in this thesis, however, is the role of the naval forces, as a specialized branch of the Maratha military establishment, in furthering their political and other causes over a period of time. In other words, the thesis seeks to explore the instances of the use of force - for achieving political, geographical, economic or other ambitions - by the Marathas in which their naval establishment played a significant role. In this process, the comparative strength and weaknesses of the Marathas with respect to the other powers are highlighted along with their other limitations, so that the policy matters could be understood and analyzed in its correct perspective. But, before going any further, a cursory acquaintance with the political situation of the Deccan area during the mid 17th century, i.e., the period when Shivaji was busy carving out the Maratha *Swarajya*, is deemed necessary.

In the sixteenth century, regional Muslim powers like the Nizamshahi, the Adilshahi, and the Qutubshahi had established their prominence in the Deccan region. One of them - the Nizamshahi - was located in Ahmednagar, a town 95 miles east of Pune. Maloji Bhosle, the Grandfather of Shivaji served for the Nizam as a Sardar. In

1595, Bahadur Nizam II honoured him as 'Raja' for his courage in a battle with Mughals and gave him the estates of Pune and the fort of Chakan, near Pune. This is generally considered as the starting point of the Maratha history. Maloji Bhosle was succeeded by his son, Shahji Bhonsle, who was allowed to continue with the same jagir.[45] Shahji, however, proved to be quite adventurous, ambitious and energetic. He tried his luck and changed his loyalties form the Nizamshahi to Adil Shahi of Bijapur and further to the Mughals, and back to Bijapur as per his convenience.[46]

The mighty Mughals, in the meanwhile, were continuously consolidating their imperial hold over the region around the present day Maharastra. In this process, by 1636, the Nizamshshi of Ahmednagar had been liquidated and subsequently annexed to the Mughal territory. This incident allowed the Mughals a firm hold in the Deccan which went on to prove quite menacing to the political fortunes of the Deccan states of Bijapur and Golkonda. A constant war ensued over the control of the erstwhile Nizamshahi area between the Mughals and the Bijapur state. The years of Shivaji's early childhood (born in 1630 A.D.), hence, were the ones which witnessed constant warfare as the political equilibrium of the Deccan area was swinging vigorously. He grew up in such a period of chaos and uncertainty.

In the purely political sphere, the most direct instrument of Shivaji's instruction in the formative years of his life was Dadaji Kondadev. He was managing Shahji's jagir at Pune in a competent and capable manner. Shivaji was wise enough to have understood the volatile political situation prevailing in the surrounding areas. It was the appropriate time for a gifted genius like him to convert his dreams into a political reality. Opportunities were provided by the very situation and the geographical constitution of the region. The dissolution of Ahmednagar was preceded and followed by unavoidable anarchy, more so in the region of Poona, Thana, Kulaba and its surroundings. He, therefore, decided to exploit the situation in order to realize his own needs and ambitions. Once he took charge of his Poona jagir after Dadaji Kondadev's death, he set out on his job and from then onwards, he never looked back. He explored the hills surrounding his jagir and succeeded in capturing a few forts (along with treasure) in the vicinity (viz. Raigarh, Kondana and Torna etc.) With the help of (Maval) soldiers he had recruited, he energized his efforts and directed all his military expeditions against Bijapuri territory in the 1650s taking full advantage of the chaotic political situation prevailing in that state. The leadership (Adil Shah, 1646-1656) was incapacitated and the court witnessed an intense factional fight. Bijapur was also preoccupied in a prolonged war with the kingdom of Golconda over the southern (Karnataka) campaigns. Stewart Gordon has summed up the contemporary political situation of Deccan in these words, "the period, 1655-60, was an extraordinarily confused time in both the politics of Bijapur state and in the larger politics of Maharastra. For more than a year, the King of Bijapur lay dying, and factions formed and reformed, trying to seize power."[47] Shivaji was determined to get the best out of such a situation. The career of his real conquest kicked off with the conquest of Javli in 1656 and his further raids in the Bijapuri territory.

Another opportunity came in his way because of the resolve of Aurangzeb, the Mughal viceroy of Deccan, to eliminate the *Shia* states of Bijapur and Golkonda. To further exploit the situation in his favour, Shivaji, exhibiting mature diplomacy, political maneuvering and creative statesmanship, offered his military services (against Bijapur) to Aurangzeb. This shrewd offer was made conditional to his own (recent) conquests against the state of Bijapur being recognized by the Mughals. However, taking a clue from the indifferent attitude of Aurangzeb, Shivaji quickly concluded a pact with the Shah of Bijapur, and Maratha soldiers and commanders subsequently plundered the region up to Ahmadnagar (which was under Mughal control). Shivaji knew the importance and significance of each of his conquests in the formative years of the Maratha *Swarajya*. Luckily for him, the sudden return of Prince Aurangzeb to Agra in 1656, to contest the 'war of succession' provided him with yet another opportunity to assert his authority, through military conquest, over a larger area of the Deccan.

By the time Bijapur and Mughals could make a common cause through a peace treaty (of 1657), Shivaji was well placed. He was perched atop the Sahyadri overlooking the Konkan coast and commanding strategic passes. Hence the next phase of his military action was destined to be in the Konkan plains. On the conditions prevailing in the Konkan coast when Shivaji had started raiding it, S R Sharma writes, "Despite its importance and value neither Bijapur nor the Mughals had bestowed on the Konkan the attention it deserved. They marked the earth with ruin, but their control stopped with the shore. As Muslim rulers they were anxious to protect the pilgrim traffic to Mecca; but, otherwise, their interest was confined to importing Arab horses and maintaining a few private ships for personal profit."[48] It, therefore, seems that there was an absence of a powerful military presence or of a naval force of the Muslim rulers in the vicinity of the coast. Once Shivaji got a foot-hold in the Konkan, he was quick to appreciate the military advantages of the coast which was characterized by numerous broken inlets and creeks. Moreover, the economic importance of the Konkan was also too obvious to have escaped his attention. The ports like Bassien, Chaul, Ratnagiri, Goa, etc., attracted foreign shipping and could be an excellent source of income. His entry into the Konkan also brought him to the attention of the maritime powers on the west coast of India, notably the Portuguese, the British and the Dutch. The European Companies in India, which, till then, were fiercely competing amongst themselves for the possession of the ports and other strategic locations on the Konkan coast, found another contender - Shivaji. For Shivaji, on the other hand, it was necessary to eliminate/subjugate all challenges if he had to realize dream of Maratha *Swarajya*. He, therefore, had to think of a different strategy altogether if he was to have a chance in this struggle. He subsequently came up with the idea of a Maratha Navy and made the humble beginnings of a Maratha Navy under his own supervision. Soon a chain of coastal fortresses like Vijaydurg, Sindhudurg etc., also came into existence and brought into the ambit of naval activities; and the attempt to harness the sea followed thereafter.

On the sea front, Shivaji had to put up with the real naval challenges of the Europen powers like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, who had been successfully dominating the Indian Ocean because of technological superiority and fire-power. In addition, the Siddi rulers (of Abyssinian origin), operating from their base at Janjira islands off the Maharastra coast, were menacingly dangerous. Not only did they possess fair amount of experience of depredation on the sea, but were also shrewd enough to successfully make a common cause with the enemies of Maratha '*Swarajya*', be it the Mughals, or the Bijapuris, or even the Europeans.

The activities in the Konkan, however, must not be seen in isolation of the larger political scenario of the Deccan. The Afzal Khans, Sahista Khans and Jai Singhs, etc., appeared from time to time and continued to put pressure on the Marathas from different sides, but could not deter Shivaji from sponsoring the cause of the Maratha *Swarajya*. Shivaji acquired a legitimate status (after his formal coronation at Raigad in 1674) to be at par with the other rulers. It was still difficult for Shivaji to concentrate exclusively on the state's naval enterprise. But with the tremendous energy he possessed, he built a respectable fleet in a short period. After Shivaji, the Maratha naval enterprise received a severe jolt with the capture and execution of Sambhaji, the son and successor of Shivaji, by Aurangzeb. The very existence of the Maratha *Swarajya* was at stake for the time being. However, the revival of the Maratha Empire under the Peshwas refurbished the Maratha political fortunes. A vigorous use of Maratha navy, under the able command of the gritty Kanhoji Angre, furthered the Maratha political interests. The naval warfare in the Konkan coast saw new strategies and tactics, as we shall witness in the coming pages. The Maratha navy, despite its obvious limitations, gained strength and became a force to reckon with. The task, though, was not an easy one. Though Kanhoji's sons and successors tried their best to keep the challenges of the enemies at bay, they had to give in to the Europeans who destroyed the Maratha navy after defeating them at Vijaydurg in the year 1756.

IV

SOURCE MATERIALS:

Maharastra is fortunate in having a wealth of source materials on which intensive regional study can be based. Regional histories are certainly concerned with political events; after all – they mostly deal with the rise and fall of particular ruling clan/dynasty. The main medium/tool of the political ascendancy of a regional dynasty is through the successes of the military exploits. Hence, regional histories also have a justification to enrich the history of warfare and of the military traditions of India as such. The Marathas, more so, as a group, claim a very proud share in the annals of war - military and naval, fought in this vast sub-continent and can justly trace a military tradition dating back to last few centuries. Their military history is inextricably woven with their political history and, as such, deserves an equally careful and critical study.

Keeping this objective in mind, an attempt to highlight the achievements of Maratha navy in the 17th and 18th Centuries has been made in this thesis. Much has been written on the military valour of the Marathas, particularly the resounding achievement of Shivaji in successfully laying the foundations of a strong Maratha Swarajya. Moreover, the success of the Peshwas in the political life of North India in the larger part of the 18th century is also attributed to their military skill and shrewd political insight. It should, at the same time, be kept in mind that the field of the Maratha valour and gallantry was not confined to the army only. It was spread beyond the conventional land frontiers (of the medieval times) and there was a time when the Maratha flag flew proudly on the high seas. It is indeed disheartening that not much attention has been paid to present a comprehensive account of the Maratha achievement in the field of naval warfare. In the last 50 years or so, only a few attempts have been made by some scholars to highlight the naval and maritime aspects of the Maratha history. The earliest of such attempts was made by Dr. B. K. Apte, whose monumental work 'A History of Maratha Navy and Merchantship' still remains the best available work on the maritime aspects of the Maratha State. Manohar Malgaonkar has rather immortalized the character of Kanhoji Angre through his brilliant attempt in his book 'Kanhoji Angre: Maratha Admiral'. S. N. Sen has rendered a yeomen service towards the popularization of the theme of Maratha Navy, naval wars and naval administration through his books and numerous articles and also by delivering lectures on this particular subject. V. S. Bendre has also attempted to portray some aspects of the Maratha naval history in his book 'Downfall of the Maratha Navy'. Works on Kanhoji Angre and Tulaji Angre have also come up in the recent years and have served the cause of the Maratha history in many ways. Though these works have been purposeful in their own ways, none of them have tried to focus exclusively on the various aspects of naval warfare, viz. the strategy, tactical appreciation and the assimilation of the geopolitical/geographical realities in the naval wars of the Marathas. The present work is an attempt to fill in those lacunae in the treatment of the history of naval activities of the Marathas.

Even though the number of scholarly works dealing with the Maratha naval history is quite negligible, as compared to other biographical and other works on the Maratha history, we should be thankful to the historians of the previous generation who, through their writings and associated literary activities, have been successful in generating an interest and passion towards Maratha history in general. The names of Grant Duff, C. A. Kinciad, V. K. Rajwade, D. B. Parasnis, K. N. Sane, Jadunath Sarkar, S. N. Sen are the foremost amongst them. It is because of their initiatives that a great deal of rich literature on Maratha history has come up in the last couple of decades. While dealing with the subject of Maratha navy, the biggest challenge which crops up is the absence of any such contemporary source material which could be even remotely related to the matters pertaining to state policy on navy, naval administration, ship-building activities or strategy and tactics of naval warfare. The sources relating to the reign of Shivaji and Sambhaji are quite scarce. Paucity of authentic source materials is felt acutely particularly in relation to the controversies about some of the events in the life of Shivaji, especially the dates. Many of the vital records have been damaged, destroyed or dispersed over a period of time. However, the most important (near contemporary) sources on this period in Marathi language can be listed as follows: - Marathi Bakhars, official and private letters, diaries and accounts, Mahzar, Karinas, Shakawali and genealogical tables.

Bakhar, in simple terms, is a narration about personality and events of Maratha history. Since most of the Bakhars have been produced under the orders of a (royal) master, political history has been a determining factor of the Bakhars. However, as they have a tendency to extol great personalities or events, hence, the idea of destiny and supernatural elements are common features of the Bakhars. Moreover, traditional records and stories/narrations are its raw materials.[49] As such, there are about 12 Bakhars dealing with the life and achievements of Shivaji, but the information contained in them vary significantly. For example, the Sabhasad Bhakar, which was composed under the orders of Rajaram at Jinjee, just 14 years after the death of Shivaji, narrates 71 incidents of Shivaji's life as against 243 narrated by Jedhe Shakawali (though covering the period from 1618 to 1697).[50]

For the Peshwa period we have plenty of source materials including the Bakhars like Sashthichi Bakhar, Peshwyanchi Bakhar etc., which contain valuable information on certain specific events of that period. These chronicles of Maratha history present the facts not just as reports or narratives but as literary ideas coloured by emotions so that the historical events are enlivened through them. In addition, we have official letters dealing with administration or state policies, statement of income and expenditure, and private letters. It is largely because of the Herculean efforts of the history lovers and scholars like V. K. Rajwade, D. B. Parasnis, K. N. Sane, G. C. Vad etc. that these papers are available to a general reader of Maratha history in a published form under various headings. The most important of those documents have been published under the titles 'Selections from Peshwa Daftar' and Selections from the Satara Raja's and Peshwa's Diaries. In addition the Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Madal, Pune have done a great job by printing documents of various natures pertaining to Maratha history through their Journals and other publications. In the group of the contemporary literature in non-Marathi language, Khafi Khan's *Muntakhab - ul -Lubab* in Persian stands-out the most. This is an official Mughal chronicle of the reign of Aurangzeb. Khafi Khan has devoted a section on the activities related to Shivaji including boat-building and occupation of Khanderi Island as a base. The translation of this work and a score of other works in Arabic and Persian literature could be found in the voluminous work of Elliot and Dowson bearing the title 'History of India as told by its Own Historians'.

For the purpose of this research work many of these published works (from relevant volumes) have been used. Though the references cited in the work does not always relate directly to the naval history, but they have been useful in providing vital links in reconstructing the naval ideas of the Maratha history. A critical examination and reinterpretation of these references definitely helps us in appreciating the situation of that time, and also help us to understand the very compulsions and thought-process of the protagonists. The attempt in this thesis, therefore, has been largely to reinterpret the available information on a variety of aspects of the Maratha political life of the period of study.

Apart from the contemporary Marathi documents as the primary sources of this research work, the contemporary European records have also been extensively utilized for the reconstruction of the naval history of the past. The Europeans sources have proved useful to corroborate the information contained in the Marathai sources and vice-versa. The English Factory Records have been of great use for our purpose. These were the early records of the proceedings of the East India Company's Agents and Factors attached to the different factories throughout India. The factory records cover the period from early establishments of individual factories to about 1708. The writers of these letters and reports could be regarded as the faithful narrators of events as they had no idea that their writings would ever be studied as source materials of the Maratha history. However, caution should be exercised while using them as source material, because, at times, they may not be free from the immediate biases or exaggerations. Sir William Foster has edited 13 volumes of the English Factory Records, which contain extensive information on the conditions prevailing in India at that time. Charles Fawcett's work (in three volumes) on the activities of the English Factory has supplemented vital information and analysis, wherever necessary. G. W. Forrest has meticulously compiled and edited papers pertaining to the English transactions with the Marathas preserved in the Bombay archives. They are available to us under the titles 'Selections from the Letters Dispatches and other State Papers Preserved in the Bombay Secretariat: Maratha Series' and 'Selections from the Letters Dispatches and other State Papers Preserved in the Bombay Secretariat: Home Series'. Amongst the Europeans, the French were the last to enter into the Indian waters. However, they were quick to understand the rules of the game. We have the references of the French visiting Shivaji for trading concessions and Shivaji obliging them by permitting them to settle at Rajapur. The French seems to have supplied guns and ammunition to the Marathas during the course of their struggle. Such transactions have been jealously recorded by the English factors. However, the most important French source on the Maratha history is, undoubtedly, V. G. Hatalkar's 'Relations between the French and the Marathas'. There is a rich collection of Portuguese sources which have been well documented in Goa archives and some other libraries in India. However, for the Portuguese sources, the thesis had totally been dependent on Dr. P. S. Pissurlencar's works, one in Marathai language under the title *Portuguez-Marathe Sambandha*, and the other under an English title, 'The Portuguese and the Marathas' translated by P. R. Kakodkar.

In addition to the records of the European Companies, some accounts of the English and other travelers of the 16th and the 17th century visiting India are very useful. Some of these travelers were either eye witnesses or were traveling in the regions which were full of activities. Important among them are John Fryer, J Owington, Thevenot, N.

Manucci, Abbe Carre and Robert Orme. From them we get their personal observations, the nature and customs of the people and their rulers in India. Ovington's 'A Voyage to Surat in the year 1689, provide us with a first-hand information about Surat, its inhabitants and the English factory there. John Fryer was a French physician who visited Bombay in December 1673. For almost a decade since then he visited various places in the Maratha territory. Hence his observations are of great value. Abbe Carre was a French traveler who visited India in 1668 and again in 1672. His observations have been published in two volumes. The second contains an account of Shivaji's military operations in the year 1671-72. S. N. Sen has published the accounts of a few of these travelers in a book 'Foreign Biographies of Shivaji'. Manucci, an Italian, had come to Surat in 1656 and spent his life in India. Though, he spent very little time in the Maratha kingdom, he traveled widely with the Mughal generals of Aurangzeb. He was also the physician of Sultan Muazzam, whom he accompanied in all his campaign. Manucci's accounts have been duly edited and translated by William Irwine as '*Storia da Mogor'*. Robert Orme, an English man, was neither a traveler nor a contemporary of Shivaji. He wrote 'Historical Fragments' in the year 1783, long after Shivaji's death. His work 'Hostorical Fragments of the Mogul Empire or of the Marathas, and the English Concerns in Indostan, from the year 1659' has been mainly based on India Office Records and on the information he collected in India before 1760. Naturally much of the information provided by him corroborates the English Factory Records to which he had an easy access. The writings of J. Bruce, 'Annals of the Honourable East India Company from 1600 to 1707-08 (in three volumes) have also proved important in studying the relationship between the Marathas and the English East India Company. In addition to these near contemporary works mentioned above, many other accounts left by the foreigners have served their purpose as far as the thesis under consideration is concerned.

Amongst the modern scholarly works which have been extensively referred to while shaping up this thesis, the following could be enlisted here. For a general feel of the theme of the research work, C. R. Low's 'History of the Indian Navy'; K. M. Panikkar's 'India and the Indian Ocean, (An Essay on the Influence of Sea Powers on Indian History)', and 'A Survey of Indian History'; R. K. Mookerji's 'Indian Shipping'; B. K. Apte's 'A History of the Maratha Navy and Merchant Ships' have been indispensable.

Other important books consulted have been: R. P. Patwardhan and H. G. Rawlinson, (eds), 'Source Book of Maratha History'; F. C. Danver's 'The Portuguese in India'; R. S. Whiteway's 'The Rise of the Portuguese Power in India'; M. N. Pearson's 'The Portuguese in India'; Jadunath Sarkar's 'Shivaji and his Times', and 'A Histroy of Aurangzeb'; S. N. Sen's 'Military System of the Marathas', W. S. Desai's 'Bombay and the Marathas'; Stewart Gordon's 'The Marathas'; A. R. Kulkarni's 'Maharastra in the Age of Shivaji'; D. G. Dhabu's 'Kulabkar Angre Sarkhel' (in Marathi) etc. There are a host of other scholararly work on wide range of topics related to the maratha history which were consulted. The names of a select few of them, even though not directly cited as references, have been mentioned in the select bibliography owing to their inseparable connections with the thème of this thesis. It is further clarified that though differnt libraries/archives were consulted in connection with the research work, the urgent compulsion to look for unpublished archival materials was not felt by the present research scholar. Hence, the research work is mainly based on the available published materials. The reinterpretation of the available materials, though have been metaculously undertken so as to suit the needs of the thesis. Moreover, since the nature of this work also involved a direct interaction with the places/forts mentioned in the thesis, the research scholar did take initiaves in reaching out many of the coastal places and forts like, Janjira, Kulaba, Sindhudurg so that the geopolitical environment around such places could be grasped more properly. Visit to such places have, in many ways, simplified the understanding of the strategy and tactical aspects of naval warfare of the Maratha period. The first hand interaction of the research scholar with the places explained in the thesis along with his stint as a instructor of 'History of Warfare and Strategic Thoughts' at the National Defense Academy have greately benifitted him to accomplish the research work. In short, an attempt has been made to theoritise and present a comprehensive account of the naval warfare, strategy and tactics of the Marathas in a simple and lucid manner through this thesis. This research work though, is not intended to be someting final on the subject, nonetheless, it is an honest and sincere attempt to add to the understanding of the Maratha history from a different perspective altogether. History always finds a new dimension and a better way to present itself whenever new sources come to light or the earlier sources are re-interpreted in the light of new information.

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[1] Panikkar, K. M., *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p. 3.

[2] *Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. VI, P. 166.

[3] *Collins Shorter Dictionary and Thesaurus*, p. 459.

[4] *The World Book Encyclopedia*, USA, 1989.

[5] *The Oxford Companion to Military History*, p. 639.

[6] Ibid., p. 633.

[7] Ibid., p. 54. Naval power is a concept that appeared at least as early as Herodotus, who credited both Greeks and Persians for recognizing its importance.

[8] *Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia*, Vol. 14 (N-O), pp. 54-55.

[9] *The World Book Encyclopedia, op. cit.*, p. 75.

[10] *Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia, op. cit.*, p. 54.

[11] *The Oxford Military Companion to Military History, op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

[12] Amphibious operations are military operations launched from the sea onto the land by naval and landing forces.

[13] *Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia, op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

[14] *The Oxford Military Companion to Military History, op. cit.*, p. 640.

[15] For a general discussion on the foundations of Sea Power, refer, A. T. Mahan: *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, (1660-1783), Berkley, 1890.

[16] In modern terminology, the concept of a 'Blue Water Navy' denotes the capacity of a navy to deploy and operate far beyond the limits of its maritime territory. In other word, a naval force having the capability to successfully venture deep into the oceans and seas can be referred to as a 'Blue Water Navy'.

[17] A Brown Water Navy usually operates in the coastal surroundings of a country. Their purpose mainly consists of policing and defending the coastal territories. As such the vessels are modelled

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accordingly (which could be easily maneuvered): light and fast, with the ability to operate swiftly in the shallow coastal waters.

[18] This was a tidal dock yard, i.e., the entry and exit of the vessels to the port/dockyard depended on the nature of the tidal waves.

[19] Indra, *Ideologies of War and Peace in Ancient India*, p. 27.

[20] Ramachandra V. R., *War in Ancient India*, p. 288.

[21] Ibid., p. 287.

[22] Mookerji, R. K., *Indian Shipping*, p. 23.

[23] Ibid., p. 28.

[24] Kangle R. P., (ed.) *The Kautilya's Arthashastra*, [Vol. I, Sanskrit Text with glossary], Chapter II, pp. 82-84. The boats were also probably used for the purpose of ferrying of the troops and ammunitions as the word ***sena-bhand-pryagonam*** suggests.

[25] Indra, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[26] Ramchandra V. R., *op. cit.*, pp. 288-89.

[27] *Matsya Yantra* was a sort of 'wet compass' which comprised of a magnetized iron leaf beaten into the shape of an elongated fish and floated in oil.

[28] Ramchandra, V. R., *op. cit.*, p. 289.

[29] Majumdar, R. C. (ed.), *The History and culture of the Indian people*, Vol. V, p. 631.

[30] Ramchandra, V. R., *op. cit.*, p. 291. (Italics mine).

[31] Mookerji R. K., *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29; See also Ramchandra, V. R., *op. cit.*, p. 295.

[32] Ibid., pp. 123-25; Arunachalam, B., 'Naval Expeditions of Rajendra Chola – A Nautical Enquiry' in *Journal of Indian Ocean Studies* (2002), pp. 547-466.

[33] Panikkar, K. M., *Geographical...*, p. 62, quoting Kalidasa's ideal King of the Raghu dynasty.

[34] Ibid., p. 64.

[35] Elliot and Dowson, *History of India As Told By Its Own Historians*, Vol. II, p. 478.

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[36] Ziauddin Barani (*Tarikh-i.Firoz Shahi*), in Elliot and Dowson, ibid., Vol. III, pp. 115-121.

[37] Ibid. p. 293.

[38] *Matla'u-s Sa'dain* of Abdur Razzak, in Elliot & Dowson, Vol. IV, p. 97.

[39] Ibid., p. 125.

[40] Ray, H. P., 'Shipping in the Indian Ocean', in David Parkin and Ruth Barnes, (eds.), *Ships and Development of Maritime Technology on the Indian Ocean*, p. 16.

[41] Whiteway, R. S., *The Rise of The Portuguese Power in India*, p. 80; See also, Ayyar K. V. K., *The Zamorins of Calicut*, (Chap IX), pp. 136-148.

[42] Panikkar K. M, Asia *and the Western Dominance*, p.39.

[43] Panikkar, K. M., *Geographical*...Ibid., p. 65.

[44] Sharma, S. R., *Foundations of Maratha Freedom*, p. 137.

[45] Ibid., p. 84.

[46] Sarkar J., *House of Shivaji*, pp. 33-34; (Chapter III of this book gives a good detail of Shahji Bhonsle's early career).

[47] Gordon Stewart, *The Marathas*, p.63.

[48] Sharma, S. R., *op. cit.*, p. 222.

[49] Herwadekar, R. V., *A Forgotten Literature – Foundations of Marathi Chronicles*, p. 8.

[50] Ibid. p. 13.

2. GEOGRAPHICAL MILIEU

I

GENERAL DISCRIPTION OF KONKAN:

Geographically speaking, the present day Maharastra consists of two major relief divisions: the Plateau, which is a part of the Deccan tableland, and the Konkan coastal strip, abutting on the Arabian Sea[1]. A large area of the state rests on high plateau, historically the main centre of the Maratha Empire which, under the fearless rule of Chhatrapati Shivaji, had successfully defied the might of the Mughals. What mainly distinguishes the Maharastra Plateau from the Konkan is its higher, general elevation. This plateau, encompassing nearly nine-tenth of the area of the state, is abounding of hills and mountain ranges. This upland has an average height of 900 m above sea-level in the west, and between 330 to 400 m in the centre.[2] It is bound by the *Satpura* Mountains in the north and the *Sahyadri* Mountains in the west. It gradually looses its altitude eastwards to the area better known as *Desh* in Maratha history. It is the *Sahyadri* range of mountains which literally separates the Plateau from the Konkan low-land.

The *Sahyadri*, extending along the western edge of the Plateau, with its western face (towards Konkan) showing steep cliff, has also influenced the course of the Maratha history in various ways. In the past, the rulers from various ruling dynasties who commanded this region viz. the Rastrakutas, the Chalukyas, the Bahmanis, the Bijapuris etc., have all constructed a number of hill-forts at strategic locations on the *Sahyadri* ranges.[3] Such forts bequeathed numerous advantages as they controlled the crucial mountain passes[4] - the artery for all kinds of movements in the higher reaches. The forts, especially those located on the higher reaches, were important not only for defensive purposes but could be tactfully utilized for the purpose of taking offensives, particularly in the form of skirmish or raids, against the enemy in the camp or the plains below. Rarely could a hostile army dominate for long the country within the sphere of influence of such fortresses. A hostile occupation would, in its nature, be temporary - being subject to the fire and descents of the garrisons of the neighbouring forts. In this way the control of such forts enabled the rulers to extend their strategic command over the surrounding regions successfully. It is no wonder, therefore, to find the genius of Shivaji making full use of these fortifications in the *Sahyadri* to further his political ambitions. He, in fact, constructed a chain of forts[5] in the *Sahyadri* mountain ranges so as to provide protection to his nascent *Swarajya* from the enemies. These forts were also strategically utilized for the purpose of making long range inroads in the enemy territories. The forts have played such a vital role throughout the history of Maharastra that it would not be an exaggeration to regard the Maratha history as a history of forts. The importance of the forts in the political life of the Maratha *Swarajya* could well be guessed by considering the following observations made by Ramchandra Pant Amatya., He writes, "the essence of whole Kingdom is fort", and that "the desire for building new ones should be the aim of the King himself". [6] Even James Grant Duff, the first comprehensive historian of the Marathas, recorded thus, "in a military point of view, there is probably no stronger country in the world (than Maharastra)". [7] Detailed rules were, therefore, laid down regarding the organization, administration and construction of the forts as is evident from the perusal of the *Adnapatra*.[8]

Like the Deccan upland, the Konkan coastal strip also played a vital role in the history of the Marathas. The Konkan area was known to the outside world since the ancient period, and was of much commercial significance if we believe the references of the various travelers and merchants of the past. The Konkan became the hub of political activities once Shivaji brought a part of it under his control in the 1650s. The genius of Shivaji enabled him to exploit the political and military value of this area too, in addition to the Deccan upland. Once he got a firm foothold in the Konkan, he soon realized that it could give him a safe refuge and temporary respite from the military pressure originated by the Mughals and their allies in the Deccan. He further capitalized on this advantage by shifting the political capital of his *Swarajya* from Rajgad to Raigad in 1670.[9] This shifting of political centre enabled him to devote more time for the consolidation of the Maratha *Swarajya* and also concentrate on the Konkan land. Dr. Balkrishna has further elaborated the advantages of the Raigad fort as the capital of Shivaji in these words, "The Raigurh Hill, rising about 3000 feet above sea level, is completely chipped off from the Western Ghauts. Its precipitous rocks make it inaccessible from three sides, while on the fourth, strong fortification made it impregnable to Shivaji's enemies...This frowning fortress, secluded by encircling hills, is nearly equidistant from Bombay, Poona and Satara, and thus it curiously commands the sea and the land around it. Then, it is only a few miles from Mahad which, in those days, was a busy sea port whence Shivaji could conveniently secure war material and keep up communications with the chain of his sea forts. It was far away from the plains which the vast armies of Aurangzeb could easily desolate. Guarded by the invaluable defenses of Torna and Rajgarh, it could long defy the hostile fortresses. Thus Shivaji, like the Eagle of the hills, with his penetrating eyes could form his eyrie descry his prey in all directions, but no one could approach the Lion's den."[10] Once he decided to concentrate on the Konkan, Shivaji had to compete for politico-military supremacy even with the Europeans, whom he met here for the first time. It was to meet their challenges and exercise his sovereign control over the coastal waters of the Konkan, that Shivaji laid the foundations of the Maratha navy in the Konkan.

II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND GEOMORPHOLOGY:

The Konkan, as noticed in the beginning of the chapter, refers to a coastal tract which is one of the major geographical divisions of Western India. In simpler terms, Konkan can be described as a narrow strip of land lying between the base of the *Sahyadri* and the Arabian Sea. In terms of geomorphology, the Konkan is characterized by a coastal plain of variable altitude and width, backed by the escarpment of Western *Ghats* on the east, and the Arabian Sea with or without a cliff' in the west.[11] More precisely, the region is a distinct strip of lowland, interspersed by hills, rising in elevation from the sea level to 150 m and, at places to more than 300 m.[12] This Arabian Sea littoral of Maharastra stretches from the Damanganga river in the north (north of Bombay), to the Terekhol river in the south. Throughout this stretch it is, on the whole, rugged and difficult country, intersected by numerous creeks, and abounding in isolated peaks and detached range of hills. It is also composed of one or more of the following elements of the landscape: sandy beach, coastal sand dunes or mud flats, alluvial tracts along rivers or lagoons or estuary etc. The distinctive features of the Konkan and its people stand recognized from ancient times as its classical name '*Aparanta*' implies. According to tradition, it is the western littoral belt between the rivers Damanganga on the north and the Terekhol in the south that separated the state of Maharastra from Goa. [13] However, apart from the well known Parshuram myth, not much is on records about early settlers.

Historically, this coastal strip, bounded by the Arabian Sea, has had a significant cultural and economic evolution from the ancient times. The Greek historians of the early Christian era have frequently mentioned about the most prosperous and important trading ports on this coast. There were maritime contacts with Egypt and Arabia and through them with the Greeks and the Romans, as noted earlier. These were followed up by economic and later on political relations with the Islamic powers of the Middle East, and then after Vasco-da-Gama's discovery of the sea route to India - with the seafaring powers of Western Europe. It should be noted here that the European colonial powers established their first foot hold in India through the Konkan itself. It was obvious, therefore, that the first challenge to these foreign powers would come from this area. Indeed, the Zamorins of Calicut and the Kunjali Marakkars did their best to resist the dominance - commercial and otherwise - of the Portuguese[14] who were the first sea power to establish their sovereign authority on the Indian land. But, it was Shivaji, who, for the first time in the Indian history, did much in order to project the authority of the Maratha State on the sea. Not only did he lay the foundation of Maratha Navy, but also utilized the geographical features of the Konkan Coast to his own politico-military advantages as well as for the naval defenses of his *Swarajya*. Coastal and island forts were built anew at strategic locations and the existing ones were adequately repaired, strengthened and expanded as per a definite naval strategy. After Shivaji, the great Maratha Admirals, coming from the proud house of the Angres', carried on with the excellent work to keep the Maratha flag flying high on the coastal waters of Konkan. We can understand the Maratha policy towards the sea in its right perspective by undertaking a careful study of the physical features of the Konkan coastline. In the following couple of pages, a general estimate of the geomorphology of the Konkan Coast is attempted.

In a broader picture, the undulating lowland of the Konkan[15] roughly extends for about 330 miles (approximately 550 km) from north to south[16] and has an area approximately 12,500 Sq miles.[17] Between the sea and the *Sahyadri* wall, which runs almost parallel and present a steep face to the lowland, this littoral region has a variable width from about 45 km to 75 km.[18] These are the widest near Bombay, in the amphitheatre-like basin of the river Ulhas (or river Kalyan) which has forced the *Sahyadri* in this part to recede inwards away from the coast. In this region, we indeed come across a flat, alluvial belt along the coast but this is only 4-8 miles wide; behind it lies a series of parallel ridges reaching 1500-2000 ft in which rivers like the Vaitarni, Ulhas and Amba have lower course, more or less parallel to the coast before reaching it transversely.[19] Further, south of Bombay, the pattern of landscape changes and the continuity is interrupted by deeply furrowed land and fast-flowing streams (which are shorter and directly transverse) from the *Sahyadris*, giving it a crisscrossed appearance with highly eroded remnant ranges and knolls.[20] South again, in the south of Ratnagiri, the great feature is the series of extensive laterite-capped residual plateau. And throughout this length, the Konkan is dominated by the tremendous scrap of *Ghats* rising sheer a matter of 3000 ft in a mile or two, fretted into wild canyons at the valley heads.[21] In this way the physiographic features Konkan suggest that this area is far from being purely a plain or even-land.

Let us have a few words on the river system of the Konkan, now. The river and drainage system of the area is also peculiar. None of the streams rising from the *Sahyadri* Mountain drain large area to be called a river. They are short, varying in length from about 50 km to 150 km, and they run mostly parallel to their respective small individual catchment areas. After receiving tidal water at a distance of 12 to 48 km from the sea, they wind along low, mangrove-covered salt marshes and undergo so much change in their character that many of them have two different names, one for the upper course as fresh water streams and the other for their salt-water creeks. Most of these rivers have a steep gradient in the sub-*Sahyadrian* tract, and are fast flowing and more intensely seasonal in their regime. These fast flowing and the rain-fed rivers of the *Sahyadri*, towards the coastal side, therefore, could not develop estuaries at their mouths. They, however, formed creeks at their mouths-the ports developed along which obviously did not possess deep harbouring facilities. Moreover, the wide and shallow expanses of their mouths are often marked by sand-bars because of the action of the sea-waves. The Konkan rivers, though important at their mouths for the depth and tidal effects, were equally disadvantageous and useless further upstream for navigational purposes because of their variable nature of water and steep gradient. These features, as we will discuss in due course of our thesis, prevented the Europeans ships, comparatively bigger in size, to make inroads from the western side in the interior. The Europeans, therefore, clung to some pockets along the coast. Even the small vessels anchoring near the river-ports up the creeks, could not move upstream because of the steep up-stream gradient. The great fluctuation in the water level of the rivers, because of their seasonal nature, was another restricting factor to reckon with. In short, though the river-ports in the Konkan served large tributary areas, there was no free or easy access from the coast towards the interior, which, on the other hand, remained unaffected by the minor developments along the coast. In this way, the Konkan rivers do not permit any easy economic use of them by man.[22] The Marathas rulers, on the contrary, made a calculated and strategic use of them for political and military (naval) purpose.

As regards the physiography of the seaboard of the Konkan, we will concentrate, for the purpose of our study, only on the (narrow) western strip of coastal land, varying from 12 to 20 km in width, merging with the Arabian Sea. This happens to be the area with numerous creeks and inlets over which the influence of the sea-water is felt in the form of tides. The tides that penetrate deep into the country (because of the inlets) have always favoured the growth of a number of littoral and estuary ports, like the ancient port of *Suppara* (Sopara), *Kallinea* (Kalyan), *Semylla* (Chaul), *Byzantium* (Vijayadurg) etc, to name a few. The frequency of coming across a creek or a river bay along the coast is too frequent, particularly in the north Konkan, where at every six or eight km we can find safe harbour for native crafts.

Starting from the north, Daman, situated at the tidal mouth of the river Damanganga and controlling the entrance of the Gulf of Cambay, was captured in 1558 by the Portuguese who converted it as their permanent establishment in India. It was one of the finest trading ports situated at the tidal mouth (estuary) of the Damanganga river. The movements of the ships and crafts were properly regulated by the tidal effects of the sea water. Moreover it provided an excellent shelter to the ocean going vessels during the South-West monsoon. It appears from the records that excellent teak wood was available here in abundance, making it an important centre of shipbuilding and repairs during the

15th & 16th Century.[23] Venturing down south, in the present district of Thane, in between the rivers Damanganga and Vaitarna, the width of the littoral is narrowed down by the hilly ranges, which, though detached from the main *Sahyadri* range, runs parallel to the coast for about 16 km inland. The small streams flowing down westward from these hills have developed several creeks along the coast. Though there were salt marshes and sandy-spits running into muddy shallows which made it difficult for the vessels of higher tonnage to navigate in the coastal waters, the Dahanu and Chinchini creeks afforded some shelter to the vessels.[24] The smaller boats could utilize the incoming tides to enter inside and even move a few miles upstream. Agasi, an important port and town on the mouth of the river Vaitarna, located mere 10 miles north of the Portuguese stronghold of Bassein, was another important centre. In the early part of the 16th Century Agasi was known for its considerable amount of timber and for the fitting of boats of good quality. The Portuguese sacked Agasi twice in 1530 and 1531, taking away as many as 300 Gujarati vessels.[25]

The erstwhile Selsette Island at the mouth of the Ulhas river has undergone considerable changes in the recent past if we flip through the accounts of the 12th century traveler Idrisi. According to him, Thane, in 1153, was a 'pretty town upon a great gulf where vessels anchor and set sail'.[26] The most favourable conditions as regards shelter and water depth were found in the narrow bay separating Salsette Island from the mainland. The sea going vessels must have navigated through this channel, entering through Vasai or Bassein, in order to reach the other ports on the inner side, and to avoid the fury of the open seas as well. Furthermore, the creek of Bassein, in the 17th Century, was easily navigable as far as Kalyan and Bhiwandi - the former being a port of great repute. Though the strong and well defended coastal fort at Vasai (Bassein) took notice of the movements of the vessels across the Thane Creek, Shivaji, in the face of such a formidable challenge, succeeded in setting afloat the keel of the Maratha Navy in Kalyan and Bhiwandi sometime in 1659.

Moving further down south, we come across the low flat shore furrowed by several creeks, such as Dharamtar, Uran, Panvel and the Pen, Amba, Kundalika and Savitri river creeks etc. Behind the shoreline, stretches the low tract of salt-water marsh. Sand-bars have been formed at the mouths of the creeks. They have sandy and gravelly beds and lie between low, muddy, mangrove-covered banks of the rivers. Below the tidal-limits, the beds of rivers are muddy, broken by occasional dykes of rocks and the creeks coil between higher banks and lower banks. The passage is difficult and tedious, and the creeks are folded too deep to be forded. Above the tidal-limits, they have cut deep valleys on the rocky beds in which they form huge torrents during the rainy season. But during summer, they cease to flow and form only chains of pools so that they could be easily forded. Here again, the growth of port-towns viz. Panvel, Pen, Nagothana, Roha, Mahad etc., have been facilitated by the tidal activity of the sea. Each one of these ports is located at the tidal limit of the rivers. Few of them served as strong-holds, some as nodal points because of being well connected to the hinterland through highways,[27] and most of them as river-ports, as we shall see in the later half of our discussion.

The strong fort of Kulaba off the Alibag coast, on the mouth of the Roha Creek, occupies an important place in the history of Maratha Navy. The famous ancient port of *Semylla* or Chaul lies in the vicinity, about 30 miles south of Bombay, on the right bank of river Kundalika on Roha creek. Chaul presents the glimpse of hectic military activities in the 16th and 17th century as per the records of History. The Portuguese first appeared at Chaul in 1505, and it was in Chaul harbour that a naval fight took place between the Portuguese and the Muslims in 1508, in which the former were defeated. In 1516, they established a factory here, and five years later, Chaul was burnt by Bijapur fleet. In 1600, it passed to the Mughals. In 1740, it passed to the Marathas.[28] Upper and lower Chaul of the medieval period stand for Old Chaul and Revadanda respectively.[29] In addition to the economic benefits derived from the control of these port towns, the region had extensive forest cover with a variety of trees, of which the commonest were teak, mango, *khair* etc. The Imperial Gazetteer, referring the Forest Administration Report of 1903-04, quotes, "the Kolaba teak and black-wood tracts are quite valuable. The Kolaba teak is considered the best grown in the Konkan, and inferior only to the Malabar. The curved limbs are particularly adapted for the building of small vessels. In the *talukas* of Pen, Alibag and Roha also, teak is the most widely spread and most valuable tree. Next comes the mango and black-wood".[30]

Further south, on the coast, is situated Murud-Janjira, protected by the island fortress of Janjira,[31] which was believed to be the strongest on the West Coast. Janjira is bounded on the north by the Kundalika or Roha Creek; on the south by Bankot creek in Ratnagiri dist; and on the west by the Arabian Sea. About the middle of the coast-line (some 40 miles long), the Rajapuri Gulf divides Janjira into two main portions - northern and southern. On the coast, the sand-bars at the mouth of every inlet but the Rajapuri creek prevent ingress. The mouth of Rajapuri creek is 45 miles south of Bombay. The chief creeks and backwaters are, beginning from the north: the Mandla-Borlai, Nandgaon, Murud, Rajapuri, Panchaitan or Dive-Borali, and Srivardhan.[32] Though most of the creek entrances are rocky and dangerous, they were vital to the interest of the native war vessels which were small with flat bottoms. During the navigable season (September to June), these could be accessed only by boats of under 1.5 tons burden. And once over the bar, the creeks are mostly of uniform depth throughout their course. The creek ends at the old town of Mhasla, 14 miles south-east of Janjira town. The Rajapuri creek, in particular, was an excellent harbour because of silent water and protected entrance. Not only was there an absence of sand bar at the entrance, the creek had a muddy bottom too. Furthermore, the tidal effects made it more suitable for use as the least depth at low tide was 3.5 fathoms at the entrance of the creek, and 4.5 fathoms inside the entrance in the mid channel. Because of these features the area of Murud-Janjira, adjoining the Rajapuri creek, was a bone of contention between the Marathas and the *Siddis* for almost eight decades starting from the reign of Shivaji. Further south, Devgad remains a safe and beautiful landlocked harbour, at all times perfectly smooth. The average depth of water is 18 feet. The entrance only three cables in width, lies close to the fort point.[33]

Down south, below the Savitri river, the present district of Ratnagiri begins. The sailors and fishermen from this region were Muslims or Hindus of *Bhandari*, *Koli*, and *Gabit* caste.[34] These people, who had a greater knowledge of seafaring as well as coastal geography, played a crucial role in the formative years of the Maratha navy. Shivaji is said to have appointed one Mai Nayak of *Bhandari* caste as his admiral.[35] The Ratnagiri coast is generally rocky and rugged in terms of physiography. The entire coastline is indented with small and sandy bays with elevated land mass reaching straight up to the sea. There are a few rocky islands near the coastline which were fortified by the rulers in the past. The coast is intersected by numerous creeks and navigable rivers, flowing between steep and lofty hills. Except for the rivers Savitri, Vaitarna and Shastri, on which tidal effects could be experienced deep inland, the other rivers, traversing through narrow, deep-cut ravines, are known for the abruptness of their windings. These rivers have along their banks the chief seaports and almost all fertile land of the district. They are navigable for 20 miles or more and form estuaries affording safe anchorage for coasting crafts.[36] In the medieval period, there were a few prominent ports which attracted the attentions of the political powers. These ports fall under two categories: (1) Coastal ports on sheltered bays and river mouths - for example, Bankot, Harnai, Devgarh, Dabhol, Anjanvel etc; and (2) Inland ports up tidal creeks, generally at the points where navigation ceases; for example, Chiplun, Sangameshwar, Rajapur etc.

The port of Bankot was located at the foot of a rocky headland (fortified by the same name) in the extreme north of Ratnagiri district. The channel is on the south-eastern side of the river entrance, and is narrow. The channel lying about a mile outside the rocky cliffs and two miles south-west of Bankot fort, could have been put to strategic use despite having a sand bar at it mouth. It had a depth of approximately 9 feet at low water; while the rise of the tide was 11 feet at ordinary springs[37] facilitating its strategic and tactical use for naval purpose too. Harnai was another good harbourage for the coasting crafts from the northerly winds.[38] The enemy (naval) depredations to the port could have been easily checked by the island fortress of Suvarnadurg, opposite to the coast. The port town of Dabhol, on the mouth of river Vashishti, used to engage in extensive trade with Persia and Red Sea ports in the medieval period. River Vashishti, which used to be tidal up to 25 miles from its mouth,[39] had another important port Chiplun at that point. The sea port of Anjanwel, on the south bank of river Anjanwel, is situated in a little bay within its entrance. Though the port had a difficult entry because of the presence of sand bar at the mouth, once inside the bar, there was deep water up to 5, 6, and even 9 fathoms.[40] The obvious advantage derived because of a difficult entry, enabled its use for tactical purpose by the native navy. Further down south, was the fortified port of Jaigad, lying at the southern entrance to the Savitri or Sangameshwar river. The harbour formed a bay, 2 miles long and 5 miles broad, with deep water and was well protected against winds and storms. Another inland port, Sangameshwar, was on the extreme tidal reach of the river, about 20 miles from the coast.[41]The channel could be used for other purposes not purely economic or commercial in nature. Since only smaller crafts could have maneuvered the channel, it was advantageous for Maratha naval purpose as compared to the European or other enemy vessels which were comparatively bigger in size. The Portuguese records mention that Sangameshwar was also used as a building yard for the Maratha ships.[42]

The history of Ratnagiri is replete with references of continuous struggle between various political powers. At around 1500 AD the whole of the Konkan, south of the river Savitri, came under Bijapur rule. The Portuguese fought for the control of its chief ports which wrought grievous loss to Dabhol and other coastal towns. The decline of the Portuguese power was accompanied by the rise of the Marathas, who, under Shivaji, established themselves at Ratnagiri (1648-80), defeating the Bijapur armies. They also successfully kept at bay the Mughals, and overcame the challenges posed by the *Siddi* and the Portuguese. After the death of Shivaji, the *Siddis* held possession of a part of this district. Subsequently, Kanhoji Angre established his supremacy in the early decades of the 18th century. The Angres were finally defeated by the British forces in 1756.[43] The Ratnagiri town is open and faces the sea. The Jaitapur creek and seaport, situated approximately 11 miles south-east to the Rajapur port, at the mouth of Rajapur river, used to be one of the chief ports of Konkan providing good shelter (against winds) to the vessels. During earlier period it was also known by the name of '*Cetapur*' or '*Sitapur*'.[44] Rajapur happened to be another significant port located at the head of a tidal creek, some 15 miles from the sea. References of Rajapur having direct interaction with the vessels of Arabian nation during the medieval period are forund in abundance.[45] This British had their factory at Rajapur which was sacked by Shivaji owing to deteriorating relations between them, particularly because of the formers suspicious role in the Maratha-*Siddi* conflict.

The Malwan district constitutes the southernmost part of the Maharastra Konkan. A big change in the coastal physiography could be noticed in this southern part of Konkan - the great feature being the series of laterite-capped residual plateau.[46] The present day Malwan starts from the Vijayadurg creek in the north to the Terekhol creek in the south. The entire coastline is not only rocky but dangerous too. The only exception to this general trend was the Devgad port which has been described in the contemporary documents as a fine sea port with a safe land locked harbour. Its entrance, stated to be only three cables in width,[47] was closer to the fort point providing extra protection against enemy crafts. The larger rivers and creeks had deep water for 20-30 miles from the coast and many of the towns, therefore, are located at the farthest navigable point. Hunter observed thus, "it was so rough a country that the rivers formed the best highways of trade".[48] Because of its physical features, the Malwan was used more for military and strategic purposes rather than purely economic purposes. Vijayadurg (or Gheria) and Malwan were not only strong coastal forts but also served as important dockyards of the Marathas. Once naval bases, Vijayadurg and Sindhudurg bear testimony to Maharashtra's martial supremacy during Shivaji's reign. The Malwan bay houses the Malwan harbour and port town. The headland of Rajkot, in fact, offered a secure harbour for the vessels anchored in the Malwan bay. Moreover, the bay was itself blocked by rocky reefs and was difficult to traverse without a pilot.[49] It is interesting to note, however, that the British had other reasons to stay off from Malwan rather than just the difficulties of navigation in the Malwan waters. They dreaded the 'Malvan pirates'. [50] The construction of the magnanimous island fortress of Sindhudurg off the Malwan port by Shivaji further speaks of the geopolitical importance of the area. Karli, Kolamb and Kalavali creeks were also significant in the greater plan of the defense of Maratha *Swarajya*. The Karli and the Kalavali were navigable by smaller crafts for about 20 miles, which could have provided safe escape against the enemy.

III

KONKAN: DISTRIBUTION OF FORTS -

The aim of the foregoing discussion was to bring to light the centers of economic & political activities on the Konkan coast during the 17th century. In the following pages we will try to identify the areas of military value in the coastal surroundings of Konkan. We will discuss about the various coastal and island forts which were occupied, re-strengthened and even newly built by the Maratha rulers to fit into their scheme of the projection of sovereignty over the oceanic water. There is no denying the fact that forts played a very crucial role in Shivaji's military system and he attached a special value to their defense and equipment. Though the hill forts signified more in terms of political sovereignty and symbols of resistance on land, the coastal and island forts under his control were equally a medium of projection of the state's authority over the Arabian Sea. A survey of the naval forts held by the Marathas establishes the fact that, like the various hill forts of the *Swarajya*, the position of natural advantage and strategic value dominated the criterion for selection of the site for the marine forts too. The Konkan coast was dotted with many such fortified locations which had military as well as strategic value. Most of them are found to be surrounding the important ports, or guarding the tidal mouths of the various Konkan rivers or, even sheltering dockyards.[51] Though, the date of construction of each of these forts cannot be determined with precision, it can be inferred nevertheless, taking into account their location, construction and distribution pattern, that fortification of the ports or commercial centers had been an integral part of policy matter of the coastal rulers. The idea of providing protection to the coastal commercial settlements is not of recent origin or area specific. It has been a global phenomenon since ages, and has been proved through the findings of archaeological excavations. Excavations carried along the coast in the Indian Ocean region have brought to light the fact that many of the commercial settlements/ports coexisted with military/political/fortified settlements even during the ancient period.[52] It is pertinent here to mention, in addition, that the coastal powers were also constantly pre-occupied in their endeavour to bring the adjoining off-shore islands etc. under their control. This helped in further securing their interests as we shall try to explore in this thesis. In the Konkan waters there were a few desolate islands (Khanderi and Undheri, for example) off the coast which, though not anyway significant in terms of economic usage or otherwise, attracted the attention of the great Maratha leader Shivaji. He captured and fortified them keeping in mind their geo-political and strategic value. That, his concerns were not misplaced could be judged from the fact that these solitary islands, very soon, engendered an intense military/naval contest which involved the direct participation of the European powers also.

To carry on with our arguments further, let us now undertake a study of the fortified settlements on the coastline, controlled by the Marathas in the 17th and early 18th Century. The purpose of this survey is also to understand the Maratha policy towards the sea, in addition to and the challenges originating from that side in its right perspective.

On the basis of their geographical location, the various forts in the Konkan coastal region may be classified and studied under three broad headings, viz.: -

i) Coastal forts,
ii) Promontories or Fortified headlands, and
iii) The Island forts.

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COASTAL FORTS:

Coastal forts, as the nomenclature suggests, were located on the coast or very near to the coastal waters. It can be safely assumed that the economic considerations far outweighed the other considerations behind the construction of such forts. The river-valleys were the main arteries along which the trade moved from the creek-ports to the interior and vice-versa. Protection to this trade and to the movement of the goods was provided by building sea-forts, preferably at the mouths of the creeks, near the ports, and hill forts at suitable points along the trade routes. Narwane, in a painstaking study, shows that a total of 88 forts, which constituted well over 19% of the total number of forts located in Maharastra, could be clubbed together and studied under the category of coastal forts.[53] It is a different matter altogether that not all of them were important from the naval point of view. It is interesting to note that many of these were constructed by the Portuguese entrepreneurs in the early 16th Century in response to their needs. It is an established fact that the coming of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean considerably altered the method as well as the pattern of trade in the region. They furthered the concept of monopolistic trade backed by the military (naval) might in place of the peaceful trade based on equality. Hence, in the words of Pearson, 'the Portuguese earned the dubious distinction of being the people who introduced politics into the (Indian) ocean.'[54] In addition, they were also quick to recognize the various 'choke points and strategic places' around the Indian Ocean littoral and guarded them meticulously after acquiring political or armed control over them.[55] As a result, the Portuguese had some fifty forts in Asia by 1600 A.D.[56] These forts had a special value for the Portuguese as they also claimed, as their right, 'Sovereignty over the Sea' in the Indian Ocean after they reached Calicut.[57] Their extremely powerful naval fleets helped them to project and subsequently maintain their authority over the coastal sea for more than a century. When Shivaji came to power, he paid special attention to the defense of the coastal region in view of the challenges he perceived on the oceanic front of his *Swarajya*. He was accurate in his judgment as the western coast very soon witnessed a keen struggle for mastery in which the coastal forts played major role.

Let us now examine the salient features of the some of the prominent of the numerous coastal forts of Konkan, one by one.

1. **Dahanu:** Dahanu was a seaport town of considerable importance since ancient period. On the northern bank of the Dahanu creek, the Dahanu fort was constructed, probably by the Portuguese, sometime in 1534 when the adjoining areas were acquired by them from the Sultan of Gujarat.[58] The need for the fortification could be understood from the fact that it was an important port with a creek providing natural shelter and safe refuse to the boats against the fury of the ocean. The same advantages must have favoured its selection as a shipbuilding centre in the ancient past as recorded the Nashik inscriptions of 1st Century AD.[59]

2. **Tarapur:** Tarapur fort is located on the south bank of the Tarapur creek. The town, in the earlier times, was known by the joint name of Tarapur-Chincini. The surrounding area was taken by the Portuguese from the Sultan of Gujarat in the 1530s. The Portuguese then constructed a sturdy coastal fort which had high walls (up to 30 feet).[60] The fort, occupying an area of approximately 5000 sq feet, faced the open sea from one side where as the three landward sides were given protection by digging ditches near the walls.[61] This fort withstood the attacks by the Mughals, Marathas and the *Siddis* for a long time. It was finally captured by the Marathas during their campaign (The Bassein Campaign) against the Portuguese in 1738-39.

3. **Mahim/Kelve:** The Mahim or Mahim Kelve fort (different from the Mahim Island of the present day Mumbai dist.) is yet another example of the strategic planning of the Portuguese to defend and strengthen their territory in and around Bassein. The Portuguese, after getting possession of the land from the Sultan of Gujarat, constructed a coastal fort at Mahim with one side of it facing the sea. The fort stands opposite to the

village of Kelve about 2.5 miles south to the Mahim creek.[62] The idea was to keep a tight vigil on the Mahim creek as demonstrated by the gun-holes for the musketry on the walls of the ruined fort. The possession of the fort was considered a must by the great Maratha General Chimaji Appa for his Bassein campaign of 1738-39. The fort subsequently fell to the Marathas.

4. **Vasai/Bassein**: When the Portuguese arrived in the Indian waters, Bassein was under the rule of Bahadurshah, the Sultan of Gujarat. The island of Bassein seems to have attracted the notice of the Portuguese as the river or strait separating the mainland from the island was a convenient rendezvous for shipping.[63] In 1528, Captain Heytor de Silveira, captured and burnt the city of Bassein. In 1532, the Portuguese attacked Bassein again and after a weak resistance, they entered the smaller fort (which was built by the Sultan to repulse any attack) and destroyed it. Subsequently, the towns of Thane, Bandra, Mahim and Bombay were brought under Portuguese control.

On 23 December 1534, the Sultan of Gujarat, signed a treaty with the Portuguese and ceded Bassein along with some territory around it viz. Salsette, Bombay, Parel, Vadala, Sion, Worli, Mazgaon, Thana, Bandra, Mahim, Karanja.[64] The Portuguese further compelled Bahadur Shah not only to obtain passes for all the Gujarat ships bound for the Red Sea but also to put a stop on the construction/fitting of any war-ship in Gujarat. The horse trade also became the monopoly of the Portuguese from then onwards.[65] Subsequently the Portuguese built a new fortress enclosing a whole town with in the fort walls after two years.[66] The fort, surrounded by ditch form three sides and with an opening towards the sea, had 10 bastions which provided it additional strength. It kept a close watch on the movement of the ships and boats passing by. This fort became the northern capital of the Portuguese Empire in India. This fort stands till today with the outer shell and ruins of churches. Though the importance of Bassein was reduced by transfer of neighbouring Bombay Island to the British in 1665, the Portuguese successfully retained the possession of the fort till 1739, after which it fell to the Marathas.

5. **Ghodbandar:** Opposite to the Bassein fort, on the southern bank of the Bassein creek, the Portuguese had constructed another fort, though not very large, for strategic considerations. This fort, named as Ghodbandar fort, was built sometime in the late 16th Century. Its location leaves no doubt that once it must have played an important role in controlling traffic going down the river Ulhas to Bassein creek and on to the sea. It is said that Shivaji attempted to take it by surprise with the help of the Kolis in the vicinity in 1672, but the attack was successfully repulsed by the Portuguese.[67]

5. **Thane:** The fort of Thane was located on the west shore of the Selsette creek. Since it was also a port of considerable economic value, it was subjected to ravages in the early 16th century by the Portuguese and the rulers of Gujarat. In 1533, it was made over to the Portuguese by a treaty.[68] The fort seems to be a later addition[69] to the chain of forts of the Portuguese Bassien which had acquired much importance to them in view of the threat of the Maratha attack on Bassein by Chimaji Appa in 1737.

6. **Hirakot:** Hirakot fort was a coastal fort built opposite to the island fort of Kulaba. It was built by Kanhoji Angre in 1720[70] well after Kulaba had acquired the fame as the headquarters of the Maratha navy. It had become necessary, in view of the continuous threats of the British and the *Siddis* to Kulaba, to have a supporting structure nearby on the coast. The advantage of having such fort was two-fold. Such forts not only functioned as a logistic base to the main fort, but also helped in preventing any misadventure from the landward side.

7. **Chaul:** Chaul lies about 30 miles south of Bombay, on the right bank of river Kundalika on the Roha creek.[71] The Bahmani Sultans who ruled from 1347 to 1489, held Chaul as well as other adjoining posts. A period of Portuguese ascendancy established at Chaul preceded the rise of Angres, and was partly contemporaneous with the conquest of the rest of the district by the Mughals and the Marathas. The Portuguese first appeared at Chaul in 1505.[72] It was in Chaul harbour that a naval fight took place between the Portuguese and the Muslims in 1508, in which the Portuguese were defeated. In 1516 they founded a factory. Immediately afterwards the Portuguese governor Albuquerque

'recognised the importance of the site for a fortress' and subsequently a fortress was built there in between 1521-24.[73] It was protected by the sea on the west and the Kundalika creek on the south and by a ditch and a wall in the east. Sambhaji, the Maratha King after Shivaji, tried hard to capture Chaul, but failed in his attempt 'because of regular European fortifications'.[74] Marathas finally succeeded and the fort was wrested from the Portuguese by Chimaji Appa in the campaign of 1737-1739.

8. **Revadanda:** As noted earlier, Cahul itself was divided into two parts – the upper Chaul and the lower Chaul. While the old settlement of Chaul is known as the upper Chaul, the lower Chaul is known as Revadanda. Situated at 11 Km from Alibagh, Revadanda was a massive fort with a circumference of about five kilometers commanding the mouth of the Kundalika river. The Portuguese constructed this fort in 1558.[75] It had high walls, a rampart at some places, with several bastions. The fort must have served as a screen to Chaul in addition to serving the more strategic function of a major naval depot and post between the Portuguese stronghold of Goa and Daman. As per the Marathi chronicle *Sabhasad Bakhar*, the 'sea-fort' of Revdanda was a Nizamshahi dominion under the *Habshi* Commander (Abyssinian or the *Siddi* of Janjira), and that, Shivaji failed to take it.[76] *Sabhasad* was probably referring to the adjoining territory to the forts of Rajapuri and Janjira which were held by the *Siddis*. Revadanda remained invincible till 1740 when Manaji Angre captured it for the Marathas.[77]

9. **Korlai:** While the occupation of Chaul was being planned by the Portuguese, the nearby location of Korlai (better known as the Cheul Rock by them), on the southern bank of the Roha creek, could not escape their shrewd attention. With a fort on either side of the Kundalika river (the other being the Revadanda fort), the Portuguese could have gained a tactical control over the movements in the Roha creek. What ensued, therefore, was a brief struggle between the Portuguese and the Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar over the occupation of the small fort built by the later. The Portuguese finally emerged victorious, and after occupying the fort they renovated it to suit their military and naval needs .[78] Though it was a comparatively small fort, the added strength to the fort (particularly the artillery) helped it to successfully defy the onslaught of the Maratha King Sambhaji in

1683. The fort was finally captured by the Marathas after the Portuguese lost Bassein in 1739.

10. **Danda-Rajapur:** Situated approximately 10 Kms from Murud, Danda-Rajapur was a *Siddi* possession in the 17th century. *Sabhasad* refers to this fort in context of its nuisance value to the Maratha *Swarajya.*[79] This coastal fort was built on the extreme corner of the Murud coastline before the creek which has to be crossed before going to the stronghold of Janjira. The fort's crucial location suggests that it could have served two functions: (a) to regulate the traffic and movements in the Rajapuri creek, and (b) to serve as a depot for the island fort of Janjira.

11. **Srivardhan:** This coastal fort was located approximately 32 km south of Murud. Shivaji is credited to have constructed this fort in 1679 AD after wresting it from the Bijapur rulers. Srivardhan was a thriving port and trading centre during that time. The very mention of Srivardhangad by *Sabhasad* as one of the newly constructed forts by Shivaji[80] and its extensive fortification indicate towards the military importance attached to the fort. However, the economic motive, as another guiding principle behind the construction of the fort, can not be ruled out altogether. It was amongst the 13 forts which were handed over to Kanhoji Angre by Shahu in 1713.

13. **Kanakdurg:** Kanakdurg was a coastal fort located a little south of the island fort of Suvarnadurg. It is amongst the group of coastal forts which were supposed to act as supporting partners of Suvarnadurg. The other forts were Gova and Fatehgad or Fatehgad. The fort of Kanakdurg is a bit isolated from the main coast as it stands on a piece of land which is joined by a causeway with the main coast. In this way the sea protected it from three sides and a wall on the fourth side.[81] The importance of such clusters of forts could be understood in the terminology of military strategy only. Under no circumstances the authority controlling the Suvarnadurg fort could have allowed the adjacent forts, especially Kanakdurg to be taken by the enemy.

14. **Dabhol:** The fame of Dabhol port has been noticed earlier in this chapter. Since it was a flourishing trading centre from ancient times, hence economic considerations could be attributed tom the reasons behind its fortifications. From the ruins, it could be estimated that the port, located on the northern bank of Dabhol creek, was provided with adequate protection by the Portuguese who erected a fortification around it. Dabhol witnessed a continuous struggle between the powers for mastery. Shivaji achieved some success in his second attempt though the Portuguese had put up a determined resistance on each occasion.[82] The control of the fort passed on to the *Siddi* after some times, but was it was finally taken by Tulaji Angre in the year 1740. Though nothing remains of the fortification now, it can be presumed that the fort might have played a subsidiary and supportive role to the Anjanvel fort, located on the other (southern) bank of the Dabhol creek.

15. **Anjanvel:** The Anjanvel fort was situated on a high and flat hill on the mouth of the Vasisthi or Jog river, as it was called in the ancient period. It thus occupies a commanding position because of its height as well as strategic location on the mouth of the Dabhol creek. The fort was wrested by Shivaji from the Bijapur Sultans in 1660 and its fortifications were strengthened. This seems to be the probable reason why *Sabhasad* has mentioned the name of Anjanveli as one of the newly constructed forts by Shivaji.[83] The fort was quite large with as many as twelve bastions.[84] It was protected by sea on three sides and by a ditch in the landward side. A portion of the renovation was supposedly carried out by the Maratha King Sambhaji. It had two gates, with the east gate overlooking the small harbour.[85] The *Siddi* captured this fort in 1699 and added to its fortification by constructing a lower fort, or *Padkot*.[86] The Angres (Tulaji Angre) got its control in 1744 and renamed it Gopalgad. That it served as an important naval post of the Maratha naval establishment seems is evident from the renovation work done by Shivaji and Sambhaji respectively.

16. **Vijaygad:** Vijaygad was a small coastal fort, built on the northern bank of the Shastri river which opened in the Jaigad creek.[87] The purpose of this fort seems to be of subsidiary nature to the Jaigad fort on the opposite bank of the creek.

17. **Ratnagiri**: Ratnagiri, during the ancient and medieval period, was an important town with a good harbour (though not as important as Cahul or Dabhol). The Ratnagiri fort stands on a rock or headland between two small bays, but they afford neither shelter nor good anchorage, as they are completely exposed and have a rocky bottom.[88] We find a mention of the Ratnagiri fort in the *Sabhasad Bakhar*, as a possession of Shivaji, but no details are given regarding the plan or strength of the fort.[89] The actual location of the fort is on the north-western flank of the Ratnagiri harbour and it has extensive fortifications which include many bastions also. A ditch on the landward side provided it additional protection and made it inaccessible. The landing site was towards the north of the fort. It was difficult to enter or land except during high tides.[90] The Angres, though controlled the fort in the first half of the 18th century, preferred Vijayadurg for obvious reasons.

18. **Purangad**: Purangad was a coastal fort located 12 miles south of Ratnagiri. It was built on a small hillock overlooking the sea on the mouth (northern bank) of the Muchkundi river.[91] It appears to be a minor fort that might have provided safe hide-out for quick raids that the Marathas could have conducted on trading ships of the enemy, to refurbish their treasury from time to time.

19. **Yeshwantgad**: The coastal fort of Yeshwantgad lies a few kilometers north of the stronghold of Vijayadurg on the mouth of a small river called Arjun river. The main purpose of the fort, with seventeen bastions, was to protect the Jaitapur harbour inside the creek. The fort faced the sea from three sides and the fourth or the landward side was protected by digging a ditch.[92] The British records of 1862 mention Yeshwantgad as a strong and well protected fort with 28 old cannons lying within.[93]

20. **Malwan**: The entire stretch of the Malwan coast is quite rocky and equally dangerous because of numerous submerged reefs.[94] Malwan was a famous port by the same name during the preceding years. Opposite to the port of Malwan, there were three rocky islands which Shivaji decided to fortify. The third one which was once the inner

island, now part of the mainland is the present town of Malwan and the other two are better known as Sindhudurg and Padmagad.[95] Since the adjoining area of Malwan could not accommodate the boats of greater tonnage because of the reefs and rocks, it was ideally suited to further the naval interests of the Marathas. The European records, on the contrary, highlight Malvan for its dreaded piratical activities conducted by the 'Malvan pirates'.[96]

21. **Rajkot:** When Shivaji undertook the construction of the island fort of Sindhudurg, he planned adequately to strengthen its outer defenses by constructing forts around it on the mainland too. One such fort was Rajkot[97] which stands on a rising ground within the town limits of Malwan, to its north-west coastal corner. It was built on a similar pattern as of the other coastal forts. It was surrounded by the sea from three sides and the landward side was duly strengthened by strong fortifications with bastions as the ruins suggest.

22. **Sarjekot:** In the chain of forts around Sindhudurg, the second mainland fort was Sarjekot, situated 1.5 miles north of Rajkot[98] little beyond the Kolamb Creek in the coastal village of Revandi. The fort might have served as an outpost. The fort is washed on the north by the sea and was once protected on the other three sides by a ditch. It was constructed on a hillock at the mouth of the Kalavali Creek on its south bank, by Shivaji in 1668. The creek, running towards north for a considerable distance, was once navigable. In addition, due to its zigzag nature, the creek was convenient for anchoring or even for building ships. The possible use of the waters could not be ruled out for a safe hide out after quick raids on the enemy ships.

PROMONTORIES OR FORTIFIED HEADLANDS:

1. **Bankot/Fort Victoria:** The Bankot fort is situated at the mouth (left bank) of the river Savitri (Sangameshwar river; navigable) with a rocky headland.[99] The fort locally known as Himmatgad, was almost square in shape, protected by the sea on three

sides and by a ditch on the landward side. It was located on the south bank of the Bankot creek approximately 10 miles north-west of the island fort of Suvarnadurg,[100] and hence was ideally placed to control the passage of vessels through the creek and also all maritime operations within its circle of control. The main fort was probably built by the *Siddis* as the vassal of the Bijapur rulers[101] but the Angres added considerably to its strength as is evident by the different levels of fortifications. These later additions earned for the fort, another name *BaavanKot*, probably because of *Baavan* (Fiftytwo) strong points in the fort.[102] Bankot was ceded to the British by the Marathas in exchange for the conquered fortress of Gheria or Vijayadurg in 1756, and it thus became the first British fort on the mainland of Western India.[103] The British thereafter renamed Bankot as Fort Victoria.

2. **Jaigad**: The fort of Jaigad finds mention in the contemporary Maratha chronicle *Sabhasad Bakhar* as one of the fortified strongholds of Shivaji.[104] As noticed earlier in this chapter, Jaigad was an important port and an excellent harbour located in the Jaigad creek on the mouth of the Shastri river. To protect the port and harbour, a raised hillock on the southern bank near the mouth of the creek, was selected to build a fort facing the sea. The site, therefore, was naturally advantageous as is stands on a cliff, 200 feet above the sea, overlooking the confluence of the river and the Arabian Sea.[105] The fort is rather small and occupies an area of 4 acres.[106] It was originally built by the Sultans of Bijapur in the 16th century and it passed on to the Marathas sometime during the reign of Shivaji.[107] The fort was later handed over to Kanhoji Angre in 1713 as a part of the agreement between him and Shahu. The Marathas added extensively to the fort as is evident from two different layers of fortification. The fort, with two gates - one facing the south and the other facing the east - had strong ramparts and bastions. The fort was strategically located and enabled a close watch on the movements in the Jaigad creek which was nearly two miles long and five miles broad.[108]

3. **Vijayadurg:** The fame of Vijayadurg as a port and trading centre has been well documented by the early writers (*Byzantium* of Ptolemy). The fort by the same name which is located on the southern bank of the Vijayadurg creek commanding the mouth of

river Vagothana, is quite old and is carved out of rock on the sea side. It was enlarged under the Bijapur Kings; and about the middle of the 17th century it was captured by Shivaji. Though the name of this fort has been mentioned by *Sabhasad* in the list of the newly constructed forts of Shivaji,[109] it probably implies the re-strengthening work done by Shivaji, to whom it owes its triple line of walls, the outermost wall having seventeen towers, and massive interior buildings.[110] In about 1698, Kanhoji Angre made it the capital of his fief stretching for about 150 miles along the coast and about 30-60 miles inland.[111] The fort, protecting the 'excellent harbour' and a dockyard carved out of the rocks by Kanhoji Angre, was built on a rocky headland some 100 feet above the river[112] jutting into the sea. Vijayadurg was the main base of the Maratha navy particularly under the Angers who fitted out and repaired Maratha war vessels in the Vijaydurg dockyard. The sea battered it from three sides, whereas a ditch protected it from the forth sides. This fort was originally known by the name 'Gheria' under the Muslim rule, but was renamed Vijayadurg or the 'Victory Fort' because, over a period of time, it could successfully withstand the determined attempts of the *Siddi* and the British (at times joined by the Portuguese) to take it. The fort was finally captured by the British in 1756, but not without the active support of the Maratha Peshwa.

4. **Devgad:** The Devgad fort presents yet another example of headland fort. The fort is built atop a small hillock with strong defenses, which were mandatory to protect the land locked harbour of the same name. It was a massive fort, occupying an area of about 120 acres, said to have been constructed by the Kanhoji Angre in 1729.[113] The motive must have been to facilitate the Maratha control over this stretch of the coast absolute as the stronghold of Vijayadurg was situated just 20 kilometers north-west to it.

ISLAND FORTS:

1. **Arnala:** Arnala is a small island off the Arnala port on the mouth of the Vaitarna river. It was located approximately 8 miles north of Bassein and has been described in the contemporary records as a strong fort.[114] The island is located between

the Agashi port and Bassein. Because of its isolation from land mass, it proved an effective mode of the projection of authority on the sea, and commanded the coastline north of Bombay. The fort was constructed by the Sultan of Gujarat in 1516 AD but he succumbed to the might of the Portuguese naval power, and surrendered it to them in 1536. The fort is built on the north-eastern portion of the island so as to allow it to observe and control shipping and navigation along the western coast. The Portuguese further strengthened and garrisoned the fort to ward off the British who were plying in its vicinity from Surat. The Marathas appreciated the strategic value of the fort and captured it with the help of the locals in March, 1737 as a prelude to the Bassein campaign. From 1737 till 1817 the fort was controlled by the Marathas. The fort surrendered to the might of the British navy in 1817.

2. **Uran/Karanja:** The old offshore island of Karanja, a couple of miles to the south-east of Bombay harbour on the mouth of the Pen river, is a part of the mainland now. Karanja formed a part of Bassein province under the Portuguese, from 1530 to 1740.[115] The island, known for its production of salt, was fortified by the Portuguese with two strongholds - one at Uran and the other on the top of its southern peak.[116] It was square in shape with bastions at four corners. It must also have served as an outpost giving protection to the anchorage at the Thane creek.[117] In 1670 it was plundered by the Marathas. In 1737, the Marathas (Manaji Angre) finally occupied the place, and held it until 1774, when the British took possession.[118]

3. **Khanderi:** Khanderi is actually a small island situated near the southern entrance of Bombay harbour. The name of Khanderi is mentioned in *Sabhasad Bakhar* as one of the forts under Shivaji.[119] It lies 2.25 miles from Kulaba mainland.[120] Shivaji, whom no advantage escaped un-noticed,[121] in 1679, sent 300 soldiers and as many labourers, with arms and materials, to Khanderi, and began to raise breast-work at the landing places.[122] The island had never before been inhabited, and its only produce was fuel, which was use by the British at Bombay. When the British heard of Shivaji's work on Khanderi, they claimed it as a part of Bombay. Two attempts to turn out Marathas failed; and even after a naval battle, the British were not able to prevent the Marathas

strengthening their forces at Khanderi. The *Siddi*, who was also the Mughal Admiral now, joined the British with a strong fleet; but the British commander found that the *Siddi* did not mean to give up the island if he took it, and held aloof. The *Siddi* continued to batter Khanderi and then suddenly fortified Undheri, another desolate island in the vicinity.[123] Daulat Khan, Shivaji's admiral, tried to stop this, bringing guns on the mainland opposite. But he was defeated and severely wounded, his small open boats not being able to withstand the *Siddi's* stronger and larger vessel. For several years after this there were constant struggles between the *Siddi* and Marathas for the possession of these islands. In 1693, Khafi Khan mentioned Khanderi as the strongest of Shivaji's newly built forts on the sea-shore. Gamelli Careri refers to them as 'Underin and Canderin'. Khanderi was one of the 10 forts and 16 fortified places of less strength which, in 1713, Kanhoji Angria obtained on siding with Raja Shahu.

The British regarded the Khanderi fort as 'the dagger pointed at the heart of Bombay'. Protecting that heart was Fort St George, bastion of the East India Company. In October 1718, the British tried to take Khanderi but failed. This failure is said to be because of the treachery of one Rama Kamati who held a confidential post under Governor Boone; while a year later a Portuguese captain, who lay off one quarter of it with war vessels to hinder the coming of relief, betrayed his trust, and let some boats pass in the night with provision and ammunition which the island greatly needed. About 1740 it was settled between the *Siddi* and the British that if the island was captured it should be delivered, with all guns, to the British. Khanderi was finally acquired by the British in 1818.[124]

4. **Underi:** Underi was the second and less prominent of the two islands offshore the Alibag coast. It was located towards the north-east of Khanderi some distance away. The contemporary records refer to the islands of Khanderi and Underi as 'Hendry-Kendry'. A narrow channel separates the two islands but owing to the rocky nature of the islands, it is difficult to navigate the channel with ease. The Underi island measures 2 X 2.5 furlongs excluding its submerged outer rocky ring. Its highest point is 34 feet.[125] As noticed in the foregoing passage, Underi was occupied by the *Siddis* when the combined efforts of the British and the *Siddis* failed to wrest the island of Khanderi from Shivaji.

Siddi might have wanted to utilize this advantageous position, as a result of the occupation of the island, for future bargains with the Marathas.

5. **Kulaba:** Kulaba fort is always associated with the great Maratha admiral Kanhoji Angre who had made it his headquarters. Kanhoji retained his control over this fort and was granted another twelve forts when, in 1713, he joined the service of Raja Shahu after throwing allegiance of the dowager Queen Tarabai. This fort, standing on a small rocky island, about one-eighth of a mile from the shore off the coast of Alibag,[126] was probably built by Shivaji in the concluding years of his life. [127] The proximity of the site from Bombay, the mainstay of the British enterprise in India, further added to its strategic value. The fort, therefore, was built quite strong with massive ramparts including seventeen bastions, where heavy guns were deployed to ward off the enemy.[128] One of the gates opened towards the coast side which was well out of reach during high tides. The other gate (towards south) opened in the sea and had a fixed landing stage. To the south of the fort was a ship-dock measuring 80 X 38 paces.[129] At low tide, the breastwork of the dock could be seen. It can be inferred from the construction of the dock that the tidal water could be utilized to facilitate the movement of the ships/boats due for repairs or even fitting of new ships. The coastal fort of Alibag, also known as Hirakot, situated on the opposite coast, must have been used as the supply depot to this island fort.

5. **Kamsa/Padmadurg:** Shivaji was quite intelligent to appreciate and utilize the geographical factors for the military needs of his *Swarajya*. The *Siddis* were the perpetual source of menace to the Mratha territories in and around Murud. The main source of strength of the *Siddi* was the island fort of Janjira. When Shivaji failed to subdue Janjira by every means, he thought of raising a bulwark aimed against Janjira. He selected an offshore island - some 2 kilometers from the Murud coast and approximately 8 kilometers north of the Janjira fort - and began its fortification. One must appreciate the Herculean efforts and Shivaji's determination to get the fort constructed amidst the sea with all their meager resources and technology at his disposal. It is said that Shivaji started the construction of this fort and it was completed by his son Sambhaji.[130] The fort however failed to make any considerable impact on the *Siddi* depredations in the sea or

even on land. This fort, because of its architectural designs is also known as the Padamdurg or the Lotus Fort.

6. **Janjira:** The coast line of Janjira, bounded on the north by the Kundalika or Roha Creek; on the east by the Roha; on the south by Bankot creek; and on the west by the Arabian Sea, is divided by the Rajapuri Gulf into two main portions, northern and southern.[131] The mouth of Rajapuri creek, some 45 miles south of Bombay, is closely guarded by the famous Janjira fort located approximately half a mile from the mainland on the east and a mile from the mainland in the west,[132] perhaps the strongest fort along the west coast of India, as far as history suggests.

The history of the construction of the fort is not precisely known, but it seems that the island of Janjira was a known landmark in the ancient period too. Its close proximity to the coast and secluded location might have pressed the native rulers to fortify it. In the late 15th century, it was an Abyssinian minister under the Ahmednagar Sultan,[133] who founded the Janjira fort on the island. The island afterward became the dominion of the ruler of Bijapur.[134] Janjira fort had a number of towers and turrets where huge guns and cannons were kept in perpetual readiness to ward off enemies. The ramparts are about 50 feet high, battlemented and loop holed. Moreover, to add strength to the wall, lead was also mixed with the mortar.[135] The fort is almost entirely intact even today, despite the ravages of wind and tide - a testimony to the marvels of ancient engineering. Moreover, repeated attempts of Shivaji, Sambhaji, the Portuguese and the British to capture the fort failed, and it remained invincible. A contemporary document on the fort of Janjira testifies about its strength. It records, "...This place is doubtless of great concern, almost invincible, if not blocked up by sea. It has 572 pieces of ordinance in it...and may be kept (maintained) with a small force..."[136] Guns and cannons could still be found abandoned amidst the ruins of the fort. Shivaji tried to rival Janjira by personally supervising the construction of Sindhudurg immediately after his first-hand (unsuccessful) experience at Janjira. The *Siddi*, however, was also quick to realize the coming danger from the Marathas and requested for military help from the Adil Shah of Bijapur. Later on, the *Siddi* got enrolled in the services of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb as his Admiral. In return he agreed to help and escort Mughal ships bound to Mecca for the Haj pilgrimage.

7. **Suvarnadurg**: Also known as Harnai, this island fort is 13 Km from Dapoli. The fort is built on a rocky island[137] quite close to the coast and the village Harnai. The Suvarnadurg fort is perhaps the most striking of all the forts in the Ratnagiri. Though not as extensive as Vijaydurg, this fort was cut from rock. For its construction, huge blocks of rock, instead of Mortars, were used to build the rampart.[138] It was well protected by strong ramparts and bastions. The gate was located well above the high tide mark. It appears that Shivaji added to the existing structure rather than building it anew, as claimed by *Sabhasad* which lists the fort as one of the new forts constructed by *Raje* i.e. Shivaji.[139] It was with the Angres during the reign of Shahu. The Peshwa assisted the British to capture it from the Angres in 1755. It served as one of the main naval bases of the Angres.

8. **Sindhudurg:** Sindhudurg or the Ocean Fortress off Malvan is undoubtedly the most formidable of Shivaji's constructions on the sea coast. It was the need to have a stronghold for his navy on the lines of the invincible *Siddi* of Janjira that prompted Shivaji to lay foundations of this 'Ocean Fortress'.[140] After much research, he selected the largest of the three outer islands in the bay almost blocked by rocky reefs, actually about half a mile from the Malwan shore for this purpose.[141] The local name of the selected low mass of rock was Kurte. The fort is very extensive - covering an area of about forty-eight acres with a little less than two miles round the ramparts. The walls are low, ranging from 29 to 30 feet. They are on an average 12 feet thick and have about 32 towers from 40 to 130 yards apart.[142] The towers are generally outstanding semi-circles with fine embrasures for cannon, with in most a flat seat on the parapet, and stones projecting inwards drilled with flag staff holes. Here and there narrow staircases lead from the inside to the top of the walls. The entrance is at the north-east corner.[143]

The construction started on November 25, 1664, and after three years of round the clock endeavour - by over six thousand skilled hands of masons, blacksmiths and architects, the massive & miraculous fort of Sindhudurga came into being. As per the contemporary records over 200 khandis i.e. 4000 mounds of irons was used for casting the necessary implements and the solid foundation stones were laid down firmly in molten lead. Though it is generally believed that Portuguese experts were employed to provide technical assistance in the construction work, but there is no contemporary Portuguese document to corroborate this argument.[144] The lack of evidence may be attributed to the Portuguese concern to maintain equilibrium as far as their relations with the other powers viz. the Mughals and the *Siddis* is concerned.

The foresightedness and intentions of Shivaji could be verified from the fact that Sindhudurg was provided extra security by the construction a chain of forts around it. The outer defenses of Sindhudurga were strengthened by fortifying the neighbouring small island of Padmagad and building the fort of Rajkot and Sarjekot on the mainland.[145] The ruined fort of Padmagad, about a quarter of a mile from the shore, almost gets connected to it at low ebb by the narrow neck of sand. Padmagad mainly served as the centre for building ships for Shivaji's navy. The fort Rajkot stands on a rising ground within the town limits of Malvan, to its north-west coastal corner. On three sides it is surrounded by sea. Today, it is just an enclosure of dry stones open towards the bay, and flanked at the three corners by traces of ruinous towers.

9. **Padmagad:** (sometimes also called Padmadurg or even Ramgad): The fort is located on a small island off the rocky coast of Malvan with Sindhudurg towards its south-west with shallow water around it.[146] It is doubtful whether the Padmagad mentioned in the contemporary chronicle *Sabhasad Bakhar*,[147] refers to this island fort. It appears that Shivaji was against the idea of leaving an island, so close to the main fort, unprotected. It has, therefore, a great tactical value. The ruins suggest the fort being used as a ship building or repair center as it had a natural, narrow dry dock. Shivaji's idea of using a narrow cleft in the rocks as a dry dock shows his ingenuity in naval matters. At high tide a small ship could have been guided in the opening and secured. At low tide when the water receded, the ship's bottom was exposed for cleaning and carrying out repairs. It is doubtful if this novel idea was used anywhere on the coast.[148]

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[1] Deshpande, C. D., *Geography of Maharastra*, p. 14.

[2] Ibid, p.15.

[3] Kamalpur, J. N. *The Deccan Forts*, p. 10

[4] Called *Ghats* in Maharastra.

[5] *Sabhasad Bakhar* of Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad (hereafter *Sabhasad Bakahar*), (ed.) Pathan, U. M. *Sabhasad* mentions a list of 240 forts under different headings, viz., strongholds of the *Swarajya* (total – 49); newly constructed forts (total – 111); forts in the Carnatic province (total – 80); pp. 114-18.

[6] *Rajniti* of Ramchandra Pant Amatya, dated A.D. 1716 (hereafter *Rajniti*) translated into English by Puntambekar, S. V., pp. 38-39.

[7] Duff, James Grant, *History of the Mahrattas*, Vol. I, p. 6.

[8] *Rajniti*, pp. 39-48.

[9] Kulkarni, A. R., 'Rajgad: The First Capital of Shivaji', in Rao, V. D., (ed.) *Studies in History*, (Dr. A.G. Pawar felicitation volume) pp. 156-171

[10] Balkrishna, *Shivaji The Great*, Vol. II, part I, p. 2.

[11] Spate and Learmonth, *India and Pakistan – A General and Regional Geography*, p. 654.

[12] Singh, M. L., *India: A Regional Geography*, p. 910.

[13] Deshpande, C. D., *op. cit.*, p.161.

[14] The story of Zamorin's resistance has been well presented in Krishnaswami Aiyar's *Zamorins of Calicut*; whereas the details of the resistance of Kunjali Marakkar are to be found in O. K. Nambiar's *Kunjalis: Admirals of Calicut.*

[15] At present, there are four districts, in addition to that of Mumbai or Bombay, namely Thane, Raigarh, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg which cover the Konkan coast from north to south in the state of Maharastra.

[16] Singh, M. L., *op. cit.*, p. 911.

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[17] Hunter, W. W., *Gazetteer of India*, Vol. VIII, p. 289.

[18] Deshpande, C. D., *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[19] Spate and Learmonth, *op. cit.*, p. 654.

[20] Deshpande, C. D., *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[21] Spate and Learmonth, *op. cit.*, p. 654.

[22] Deshpande, C. D., *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[23] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 102; see also Deloche Jean, *Transport and Communications in India Prior to Steam Locomotion*, p. 65; See also, Qaisar, A J., 'Shipbuilding in the Mughal Empire during the 17th Century', *IESHR*, Vol. 2, June 1968.

[24] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 95 for Dahanu; and Vol. III, p. 417 for Chinchini.

[25] *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 58.

[26] Al Idrisi's *Nuzhatu-l-Mulk*, refers Thane as 'Bana'; [in Elliot and Dowson, Vol. I, p. 89].

[27] Both Pen and Panvel were well connected with highway, Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. XI, pp. 51-52 and 131-32.

[28] *Imperial Gazetteer of India* (Provincial Series), Bombay Presidency (hereafter *Imperial Gazetteer*), Vol. II, p. 127.

[29] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 376.

[30] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

[31] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 84, 87. *Sabhasad* classifies Revadanda and Rajapuri as sea fortresses which were under Nizamshahi naval dominions, held by *Habshi* (Abssynian) commander.

[32] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.* pp, 488-89.

[33] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 233.

[34] Ibid., Vol. XII, pp. 5-6.

[35] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 87.

[36] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. p. 143-45; see also Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.* Vol. XII, pp. 5-6

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[37]Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 77-78.

[38] *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 121; Vol. V, p. 340.

[39] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. p. 159.

[40] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 290.

[41] *Ibid.* Vol. XII, pp 215-16.

[42] Pissurlencar, S. S., *Portuguez-Marathe Sambandha*, p. 41 (vide footnote no. 10). The Portuguese called the ships built by Shivaji *sanguiceis* because such ships were built on Sangameshwar river.

[43] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. p. 147; see also Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. XII, p. 6.

[44] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 71.

[45] *Ibid.* Vol. XI, p. 384-85.

[46] Spate and Learmonth, *op. cit.*, p. 654.

[47] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 233.

[48] *Ibid.* Vol. XII, p. 6.

[49] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IX, pp. 272-73.

[50] The Malvan pirates have been frequently mentioned in the British accounts. For more information see *Pirates of Malabar* by Biddulph John.

[51] Recently, Wing Commander (Retd.), Dr. M. S. Narwane has come up with a valuable publication on the Coastal Forts, titled *The Heritage Sites of Maritime Maharastra*.

[52] Ray, H. P., *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[53] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 270.

[54] Pearson, M. N., *The Portuguese in India*, p. 29

[55] Pearson, M. N., 'The Portuguese in India and Indian Ocean: An overview of Sixteenth Century', in Pius Malekandathil and Jamal Mohammad (eds.), *The Portuguese, Indian Ocean and European Bridgeheads 1500-1800*, (chapter, 4).

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[56] Pearson, M. N., *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat*, p. 31.

[57] Whiteway, R. S., *The Rise of The Portuguese Power in India*, p.21.

[58] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 95.

[59] Quoted by Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites…*, p. 53.

[60] Ibid., pp. 57-58.

[61] Kamalpur, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 120.

[62] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IX, p. 80.

[63] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 190.

[64] The ceded territory was estimated to bring in 30,000 Sterling-Pound annually, as revenue. See, Whiteway, R. S., *op. cit.*, p. 236.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 191.

[67] Duff, James Grant, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 184.

[68] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. XIII, p. 258.

[69] The Portuguese records show that the then Portuguese General of Bassein, Don Luiz Botelo, started the construction of the fort in March, 1733, when Peshwa Bajirao was busy with the campaign against the *Siddi*. See, Pissurlencar, P. S., *op. cit.*, p. 154.

[70] Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites…*, p. 93.

[71] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 127.

[72] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 376.

[73] Whiteway, R. S., *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[74] Duff, James Grant, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 227. The Portuguese documents, however, mention that Shivaji took possession of Upper Chaul in 1657. It does not speak about any fort. See, Pissurlencar, P. S., *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[75] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 130.

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[76] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 84.

[77] Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites...*, p. 98.

[78] An inscription above a doorway on the highest part of the fort records the year of construction of the fort in 1646. See, Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites*, p. 101.

[79] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 84, 86.

[80] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 116.

[81] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 142; see also, Narwane's *Heritage Sites…*, p. 126.

[82] Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites…*, p. 130; See also Duff, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 130. Duff, however, mentions that Shivaji took Dabhol by defeating Rustam Zaman, a Bijapuri noble of considerable fame.

[83] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 115.

[84] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 160; see also Hunter, W.W., *op, cit.*, Vol. I, p. 290.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Apte, B. K., *History of Maratha Navy and Merchantship*, p. 20.

[87] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 162.

[88] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. XII, p. 12.

[89] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 115.

[90] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 167.

[91] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. XI, p. 321.

[92] *Gazetteer of Bombay Presidency* (hereafter GBP), Vol. X. p. 384.

[93] Quoted by Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites…*, p. 154.

[94] GBP, Vol. X, p. 11.

[95] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 165.

[96] For more information on this topic, see Biddulph John, *Pirates of Malabar*.

[97] GBP, Vol. IX, p.; see also Kamalpur, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 121.

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[98] Ibid.

[99] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 162.

[100] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 449.

[101] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, pp. 139-40.

[102] Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites*, p. 117.

[103] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 162.

[104] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 114.

[105] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 45.

[106] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 165.

[107] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 46.

[108] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 165.

[109] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 115.

[110] GBP, Vol. X, p 380; see also Kamalpur, J. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 27-29.

[111] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 170.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 233.

[114] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 331.

[115] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, pp. 132-33.

[116] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 467.

[117] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 126.

[118] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 133.

[119] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 115.

[120] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 134.

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[121] Shivaji, after failing to take the *Siddi* stronghold of Janjira, another island fortress, had embarked upon the policy of construction of similar island forts beginning with the Sindhudurg fort. He had also put the strengthening of the coastal defenses on high priority thereafter.

[122] GBP, Vol. XI, p. 325.

[123] GBP, Vol. XI, p. 396.

[124] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 135.

[125] GBP, Vol. XI, p.11.

[126] *Imperial Gazetteer, op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 127.

[127] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 115; See also Duff, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 137. Duff, however, suggests that the fort was repaired and reconstructed by Shivaji; Duff writes, "He (Shivaji) built Sindeedroog or Malwan... He rebuilt and strengthened Kolabah; repaired Severndroog and Viziadroog and prepared vessel at all these places..."

[128] Kamalpur, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 121; The discarded big guns with wheeled carriages could still be seen inside the fort.

[129] Apte, B. K., *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[130] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 126; cf. *Heritage Sites*, (p. 109), by the same author.

[131] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, pp. 488-89.

[132] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 141.

[133] It had been a policy, initiated by Bahmani rulers, to settle the Abyssinians on the western coast of India. They were brought as slaves by the rulers and nobles many of them rose to prominence because of their courage, loyalty and above all, their knowledge of sea.

[134] *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, pp. 489-90.

[135] Narwane, M. S. *Heritage Sites...*, pp. 103-05.

[136] Foster, William, *English Factories in India* [in 13 Volumes; hereafter EF] (1668-69), Bombay letter (to Surat) dated 16 October, 1669.

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[137] Hunter, W. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. XII, p. 3.

[138] The total area of the fort was approximately 8 acres. See Kamalpur, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 121; See also, Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites*, pp. 125-26.

[139] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 115; even Sardesai tries to establish that the fort was built anew by Shivaji, see, Sardesai, G. S., *New History of Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 129. But the *Imperial Gazetteer* (Vol. II, pp. 157-58) mentions that the 'Golden Fortress' was built in the 15th century by the Bijapur Sultans and was strengthened by Shivaji in 1660. It passed on to Kanhoji Angre after the death of Sidhoji Gujar, the Maratha Admiral in 1698.

[140] Even *Sabhasad* mentions that after the fight with the *Siddi*, Shivaji not only constructed new forts and strongholds at various places, but also fitted out navy with different nomenclatures of boats. *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 86-87, 115.

[141] *Imperial Gazetteer*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 165.

[142] Kamalpur, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 121; see also Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites...*, pp. 163-64.

[143] Cf. Apte, B. K., *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

[144] Pissurlenkar, P. S., *op. cit.*, p. 54; Pissurlencar, however, maintains that the employment of the Portuguese workmen for building castles and forts was not unusual. The rulers of Bijapur had employed them for construction works on more than one occasion.

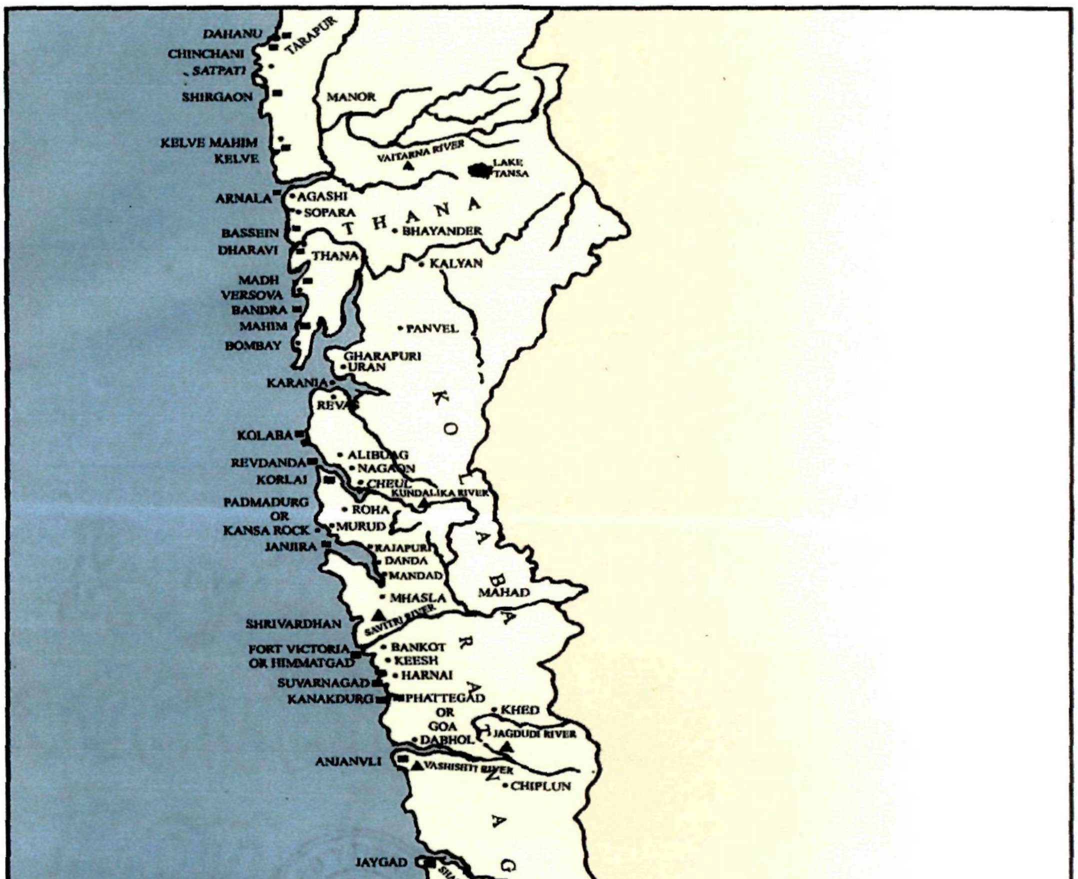
[145] Kamalpur, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[146] Narwane, M. S., *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 189.

[147] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 115. Though the name Padmagad is mentioned by *Sabhasad*, it is not prefixed by the word *Janjira*, which stands for any water/island fort.

[148] Narwane, M. S., *Heritage Sites...*, p. 166; See also, Narwane's *Forts of Maharastra*, p. 189.

Map of Konkan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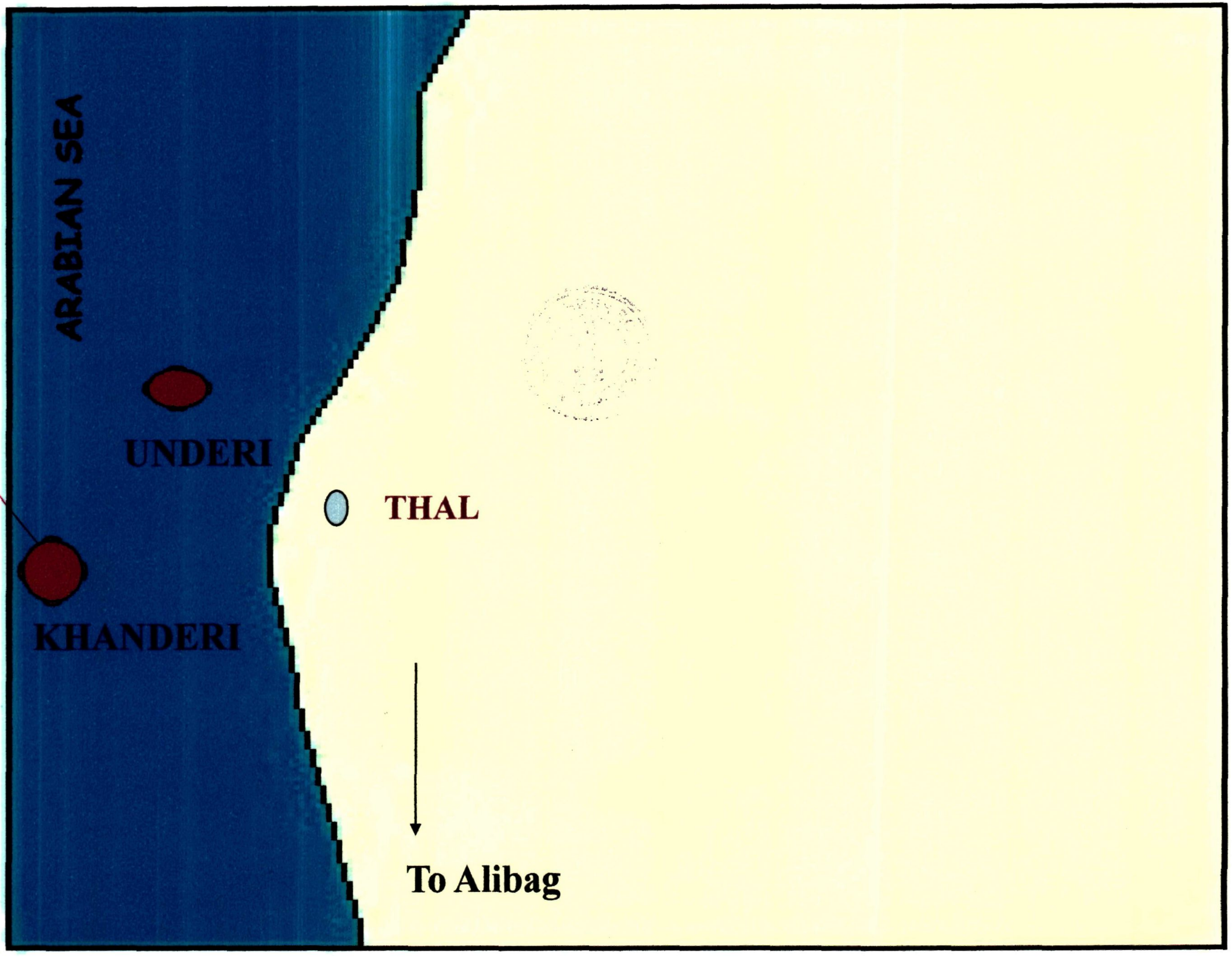
MANOR
KELVE MAHIM
KELVE
VAITARNA RIVER
LAKE TANSA
ARNALA
AGASHI
SOPARA
THANA
BHAYANDER
BASSEIN
DHARAVI
THANA
KALYAN
MADH
VERSOVA
BANDRA
MAHIM
BOMBAY
PANVEL
GHARAPURI
URAN
KARANJA
REVAS
KOLABA
KOLABA
ALIBAG
REVDANDA
NAGAON
KORLAI
CHEUL
KUNDALIKA RIVER
PADMADURG OR KANSA ROCK
ROHA
MURUD
JANJIRA
RAJAPURI
DANDA
MANDAD
MAHAD
MHASLA
SHRIVARDHAN
SAVITRI RIVER
FORT VICTORIA OR HIMMATGAD
BANKOT
KEESH
SUVARNAGAD
HARNAI
KANAKDURG
PHATTEGAD OR GOA
KHED
DABHOL
JAGDUDI RIVER
ANJANVLI
VASHISHTI RIVER
CHIPLUN
RATNAGIRI
JAYGAD
SHASTRI RIVER
RATNAGIRI
PURNAGAD
MUCHKANDI RIVER
RAJAPUR
JAITPUR CREEK
SHUNA RIVER
KHAREPATAN
VIJAYDURG
VAGHOTHANE
DEVGAD
ACHARE
GAD RIVER
SINDHUDURG
KARALI RIVER
MALVAN
KUDAL
VENGURLE
BURNT ISL.
REDI
TEREKHOL CREEK
AGUADA
PANJIM
MARMAGAO
VASCO DA GAMA
PHONDA
GOA
MAP OF KONKAN
FORT .... ■
PORT OR TOWN .... ●
RIVER .... ▲

Source: B.K.Apte, *A History of the Maratha Navy and Merchantships*, Bombay, 1973.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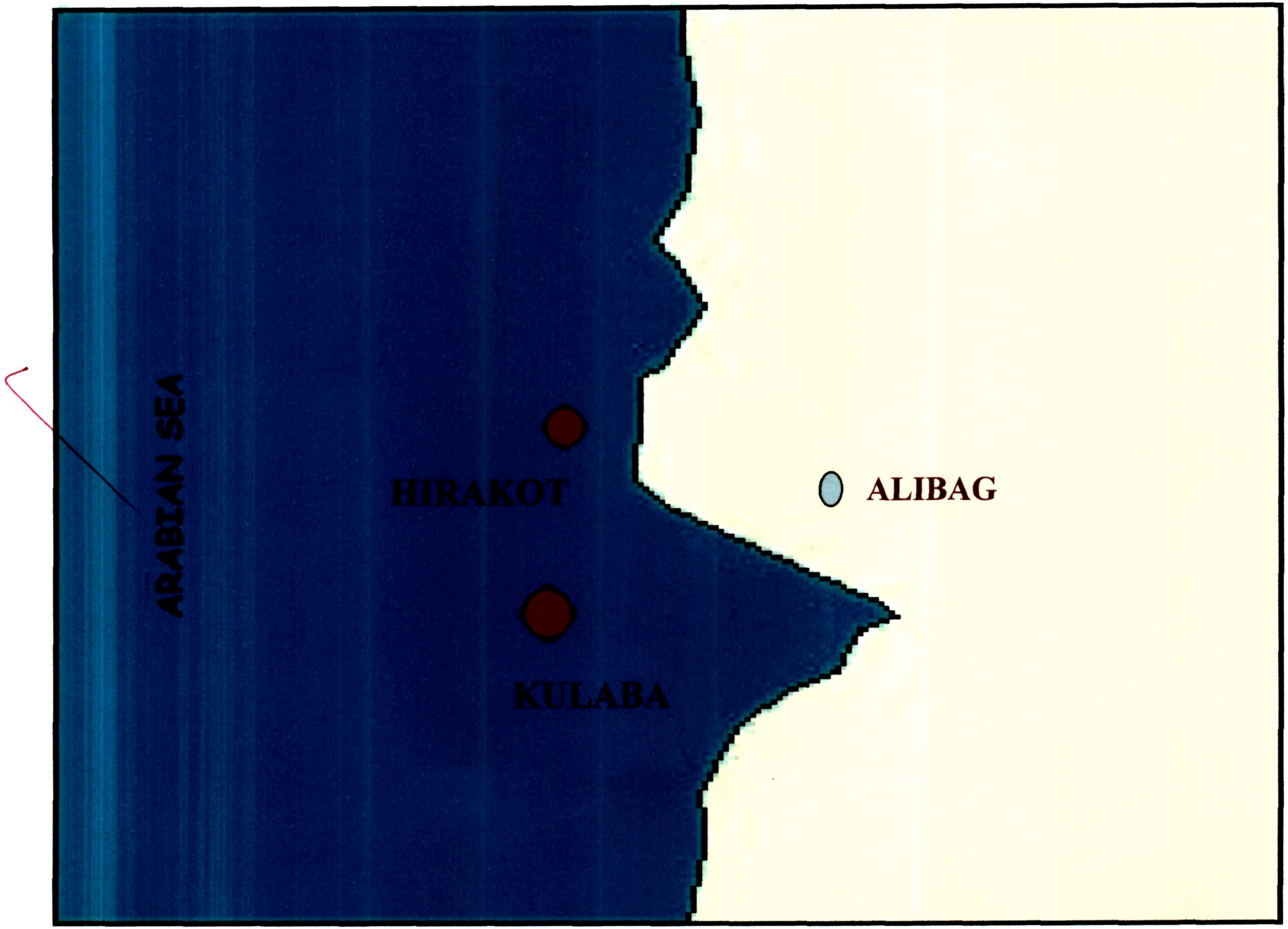
UNDERI
THAL
KHANDERI
To Alibag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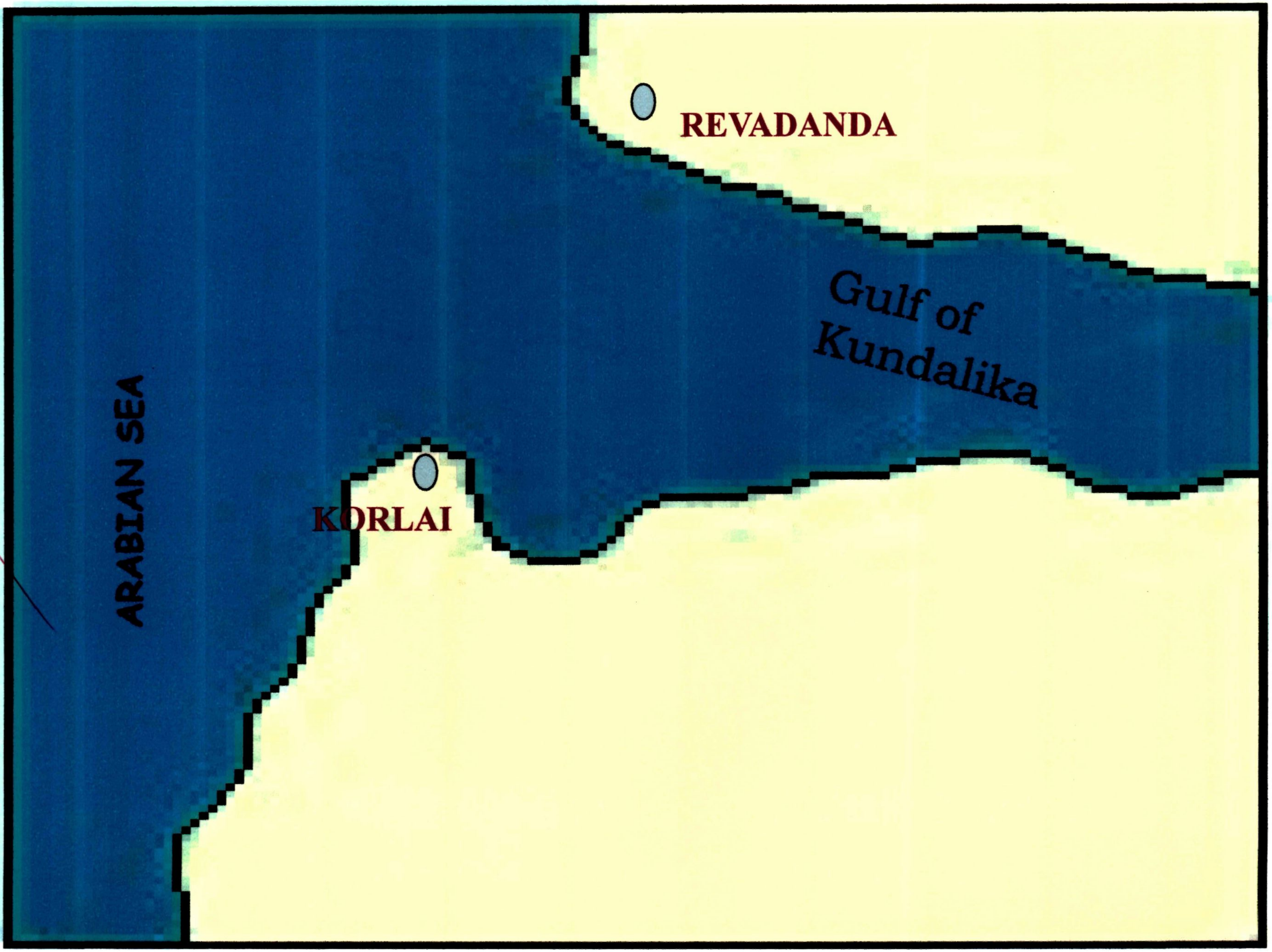
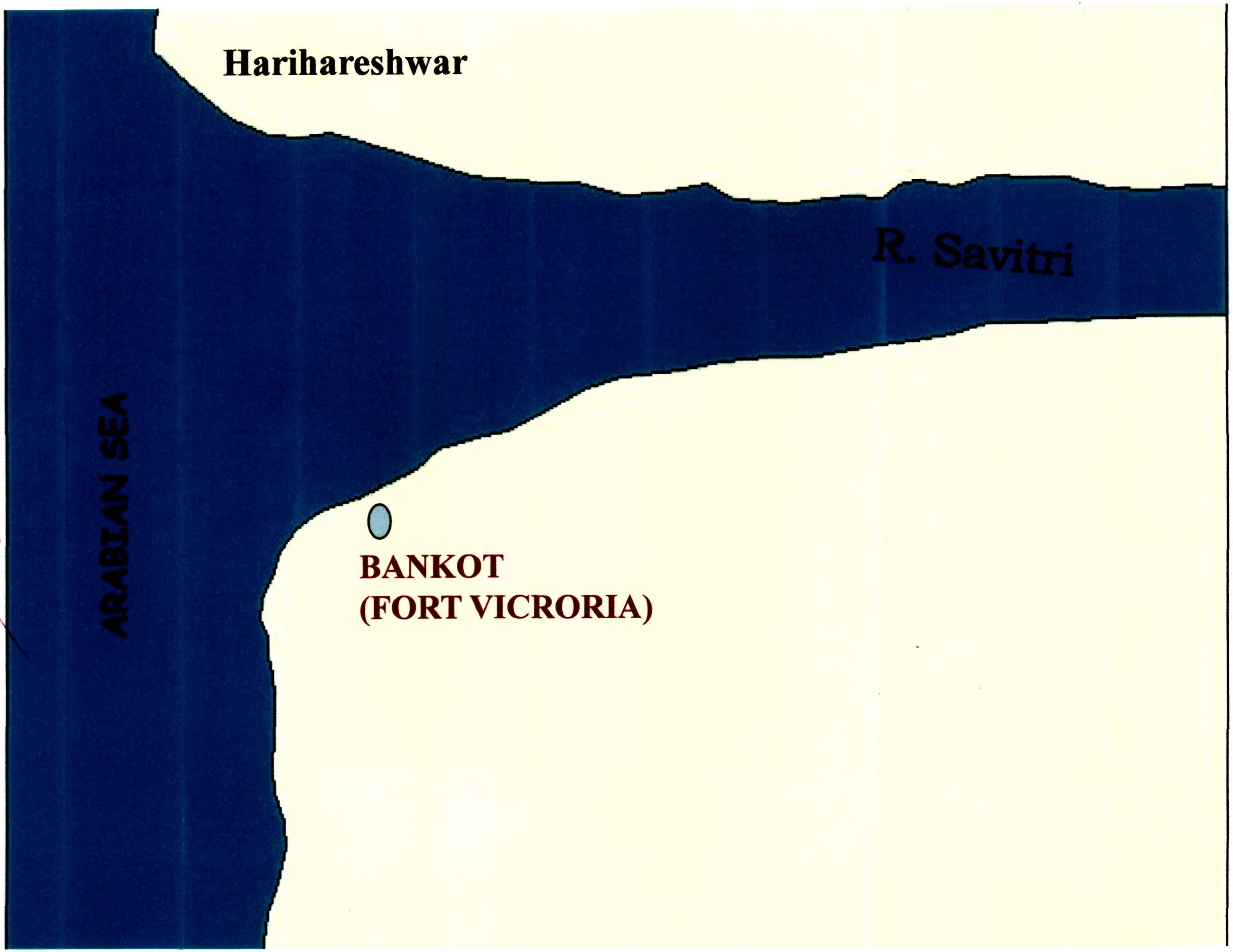
KULABA


REVADANDA
Gulf of Kundalika
ARABIAN SEA
KORLAI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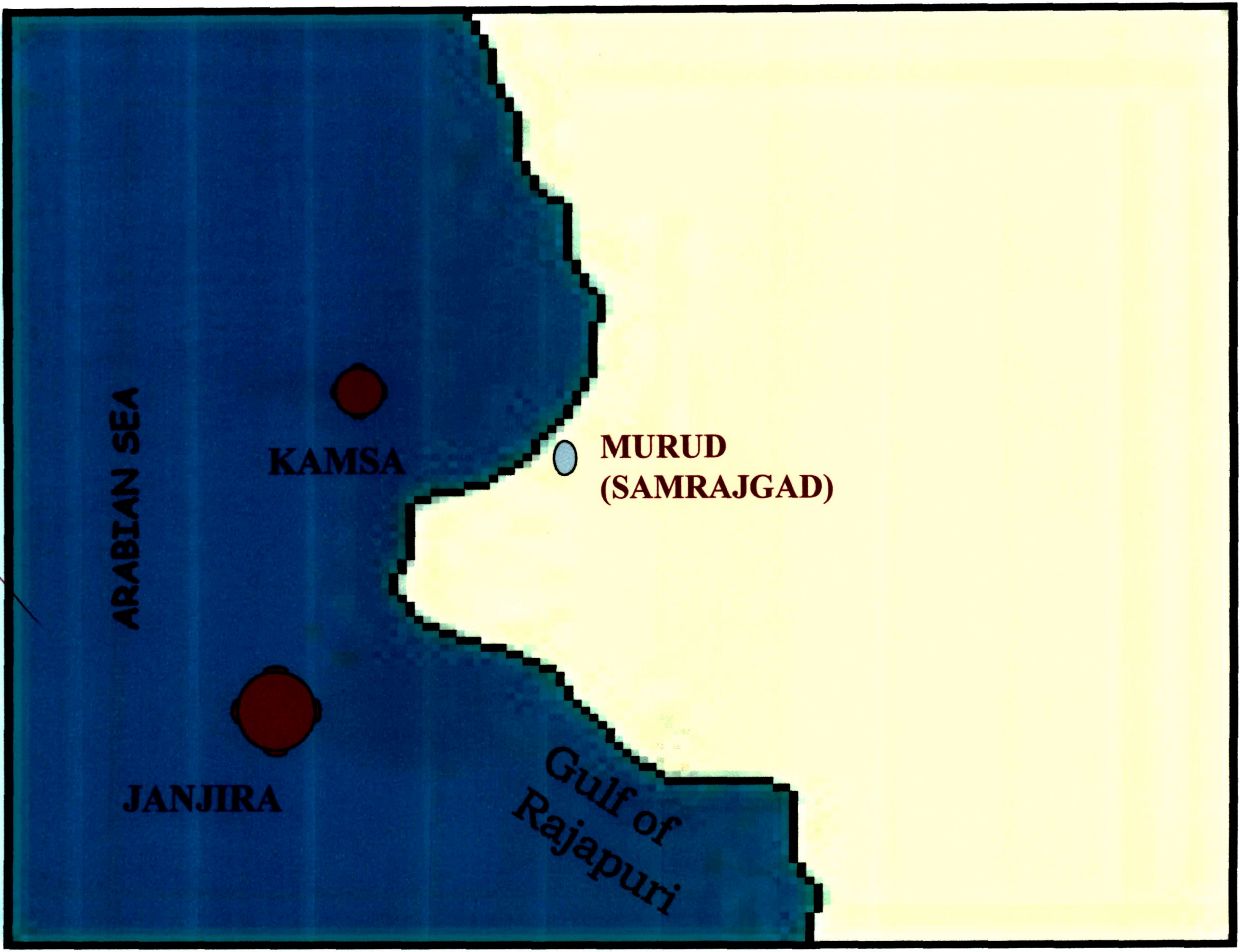
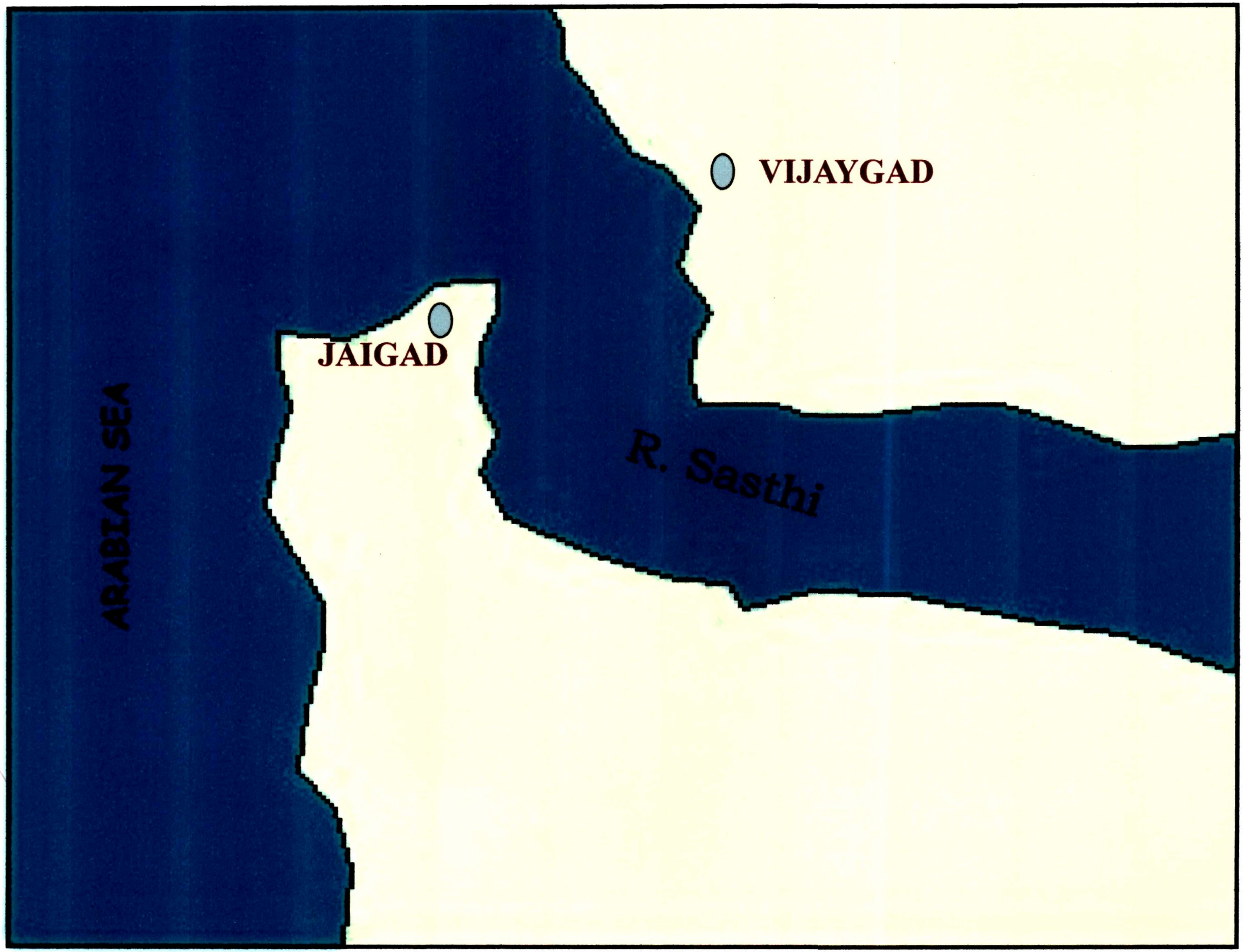
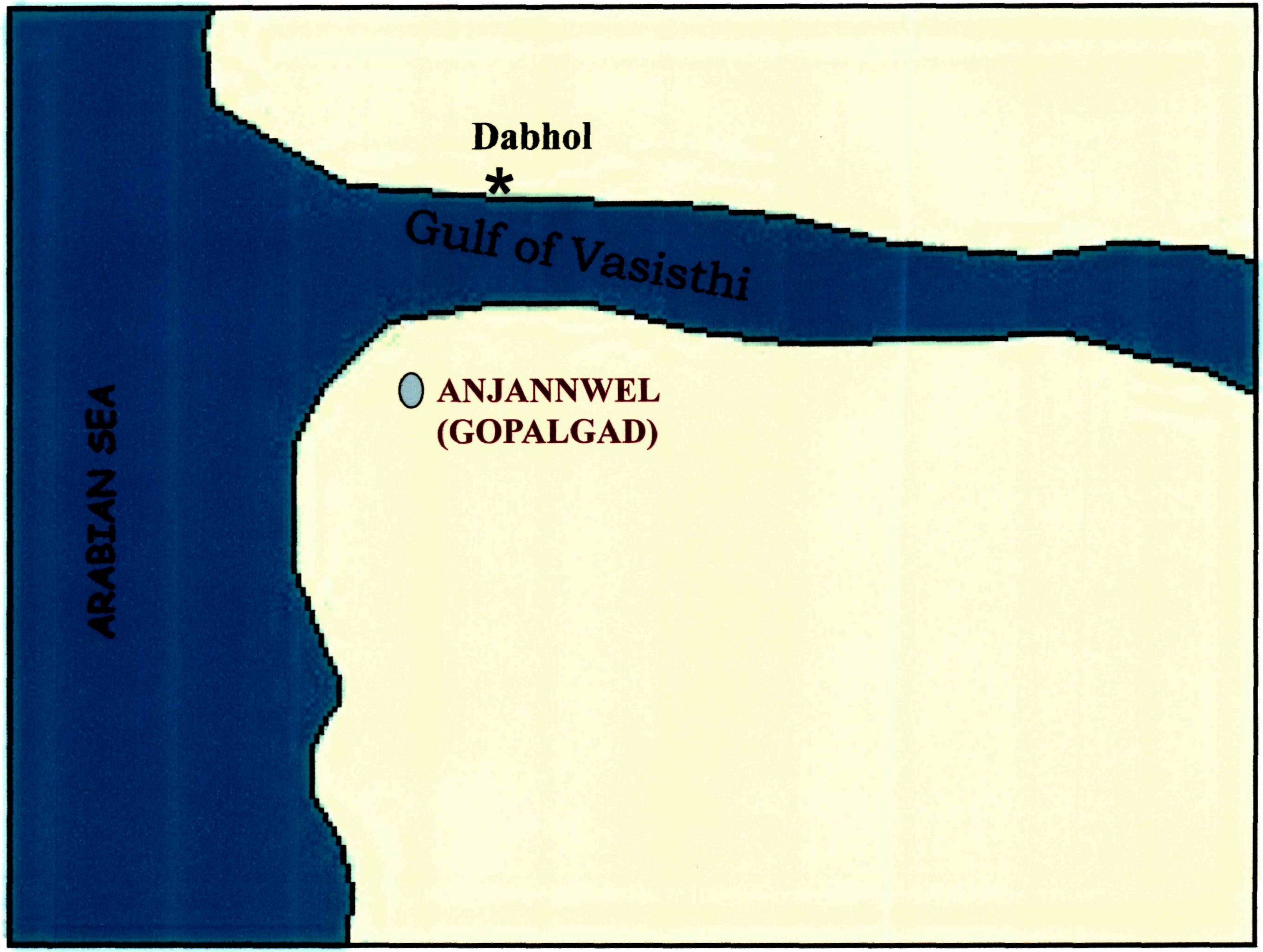
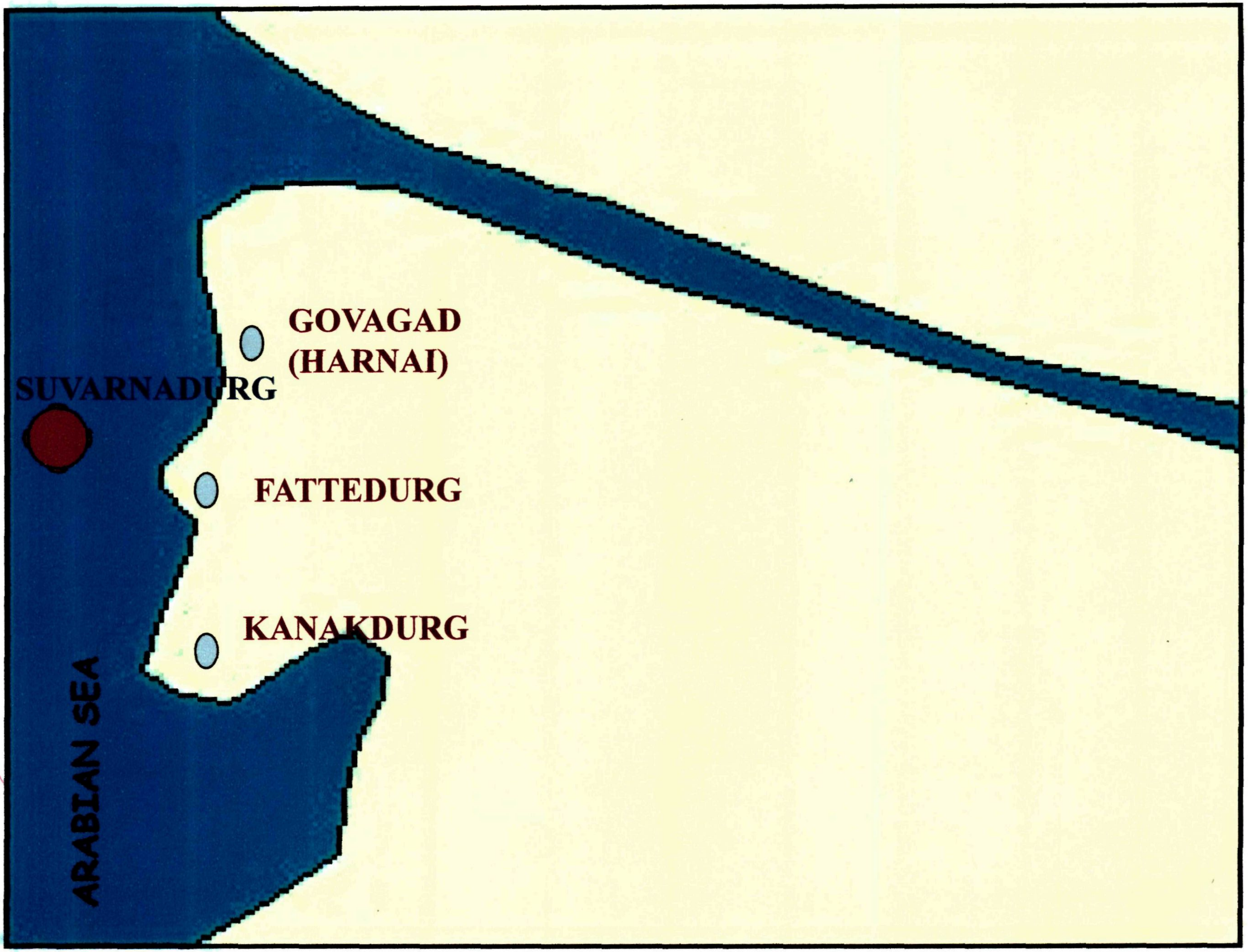
R. Savitri
ARABIAN SEA
BANKOT
(FORT VICRORIA)


ARABIAN SEA
KAMSA
MURUD
(SAMRAJGAD)
JANJIRA
Gulf of
Rajapuri


VIJAYGAD
JAIGAD
ARABIAN SEA
R. Sasthi


Dabhol
Gulf of Vasisthi
ARABIAN SEA
ANJANNWEL
(GOPALGAD)


GOVAGAD
(HARNAI)
SUVARNADURG
FATTEDURG
KANAKDURG
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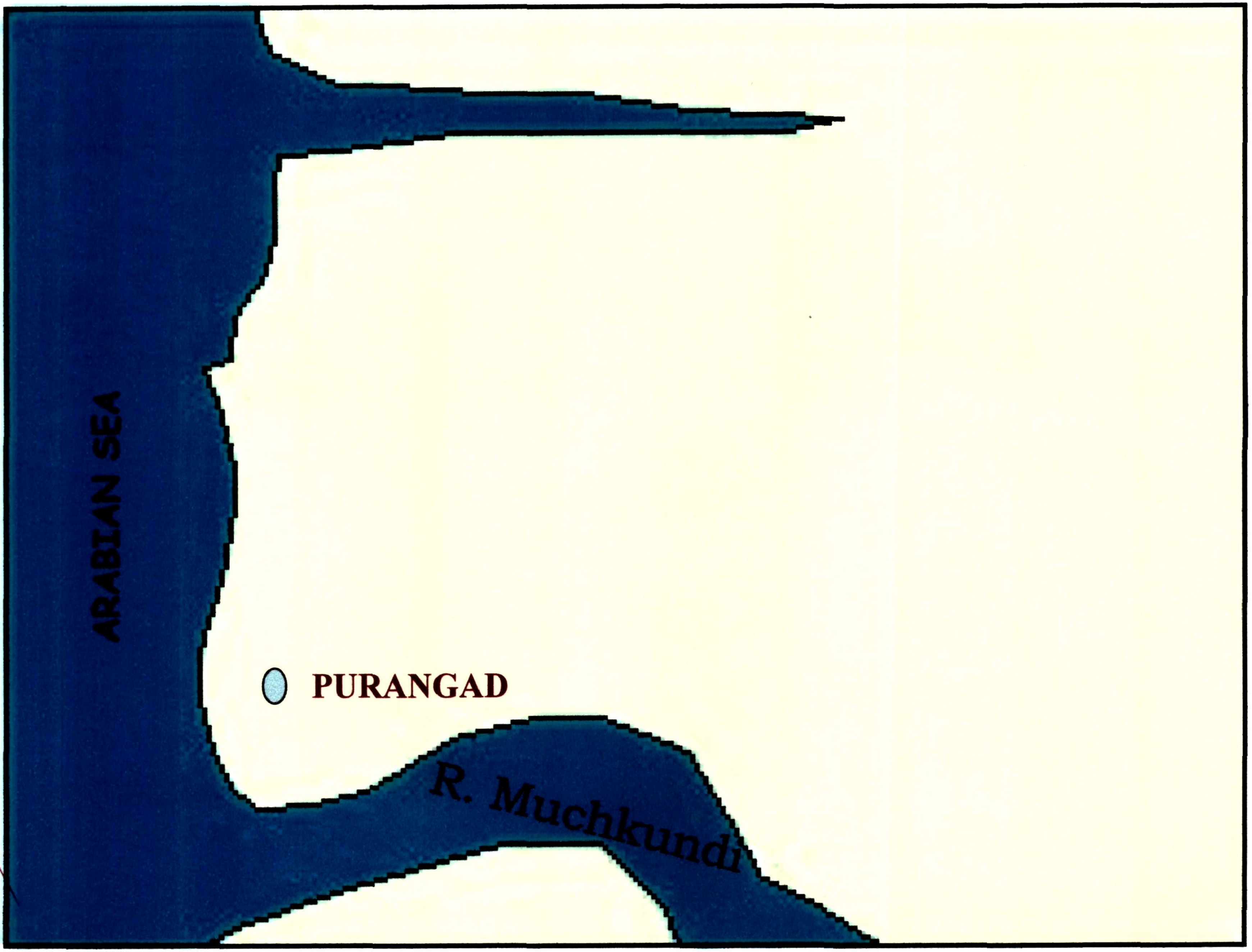
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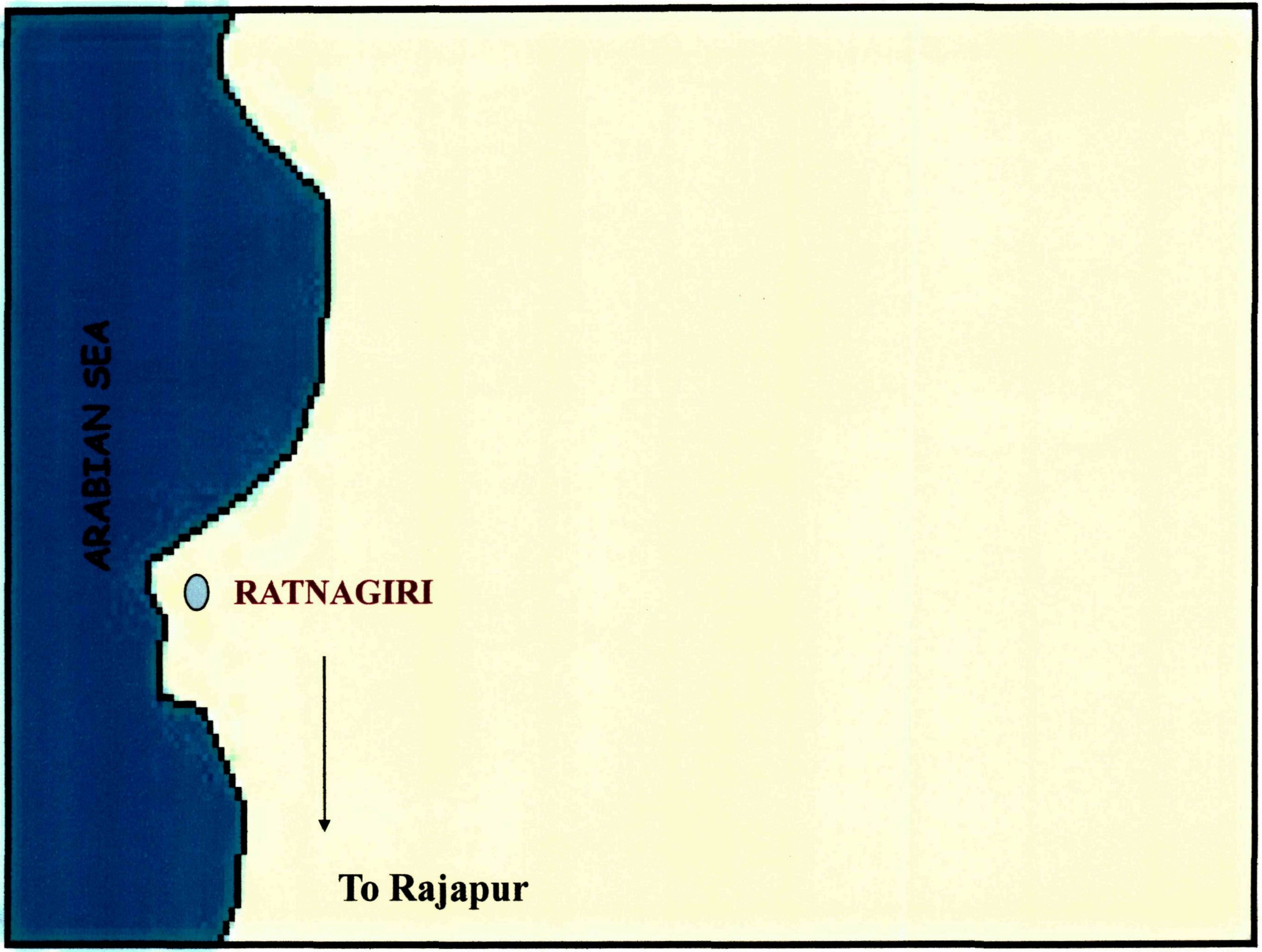
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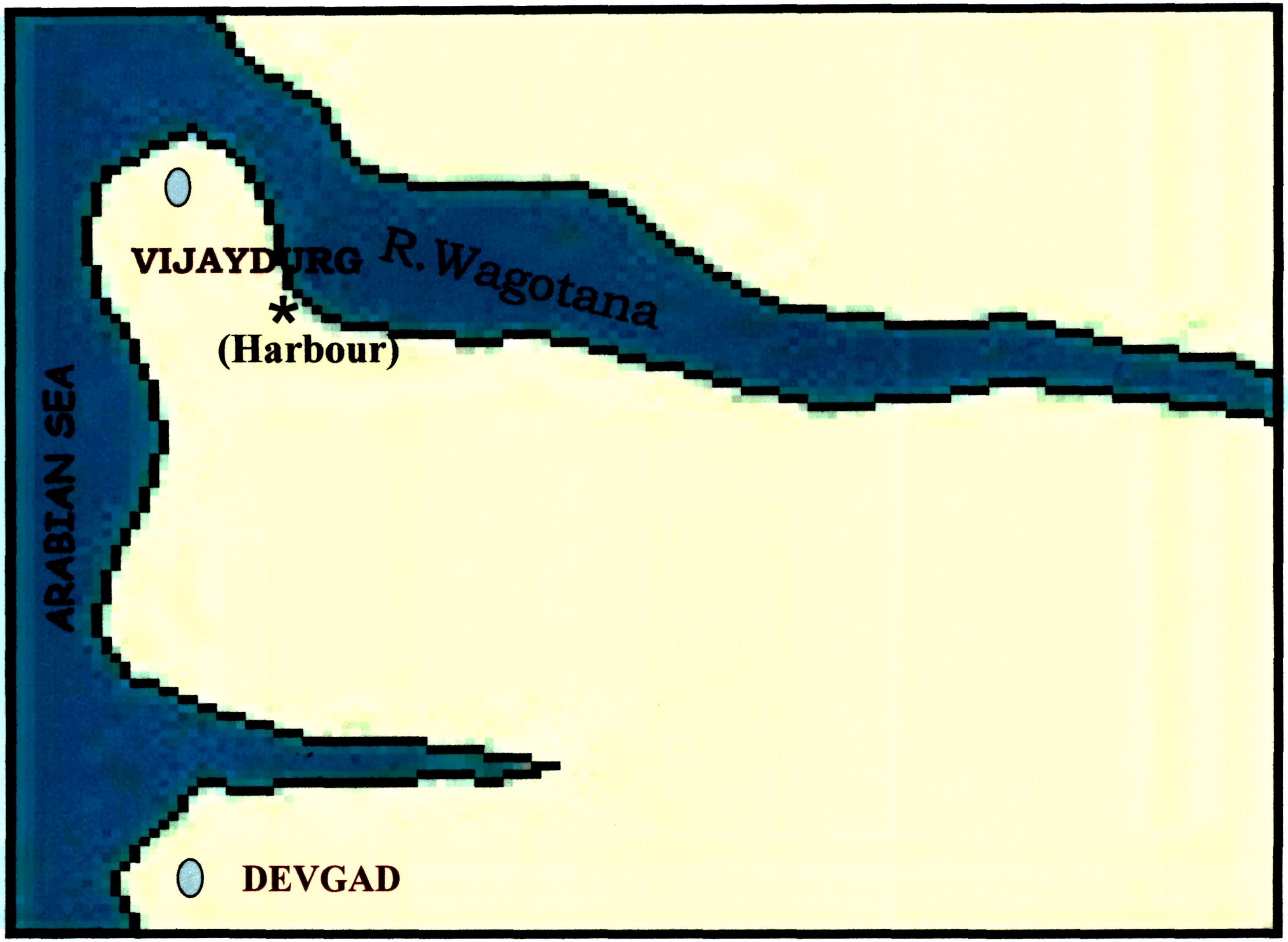
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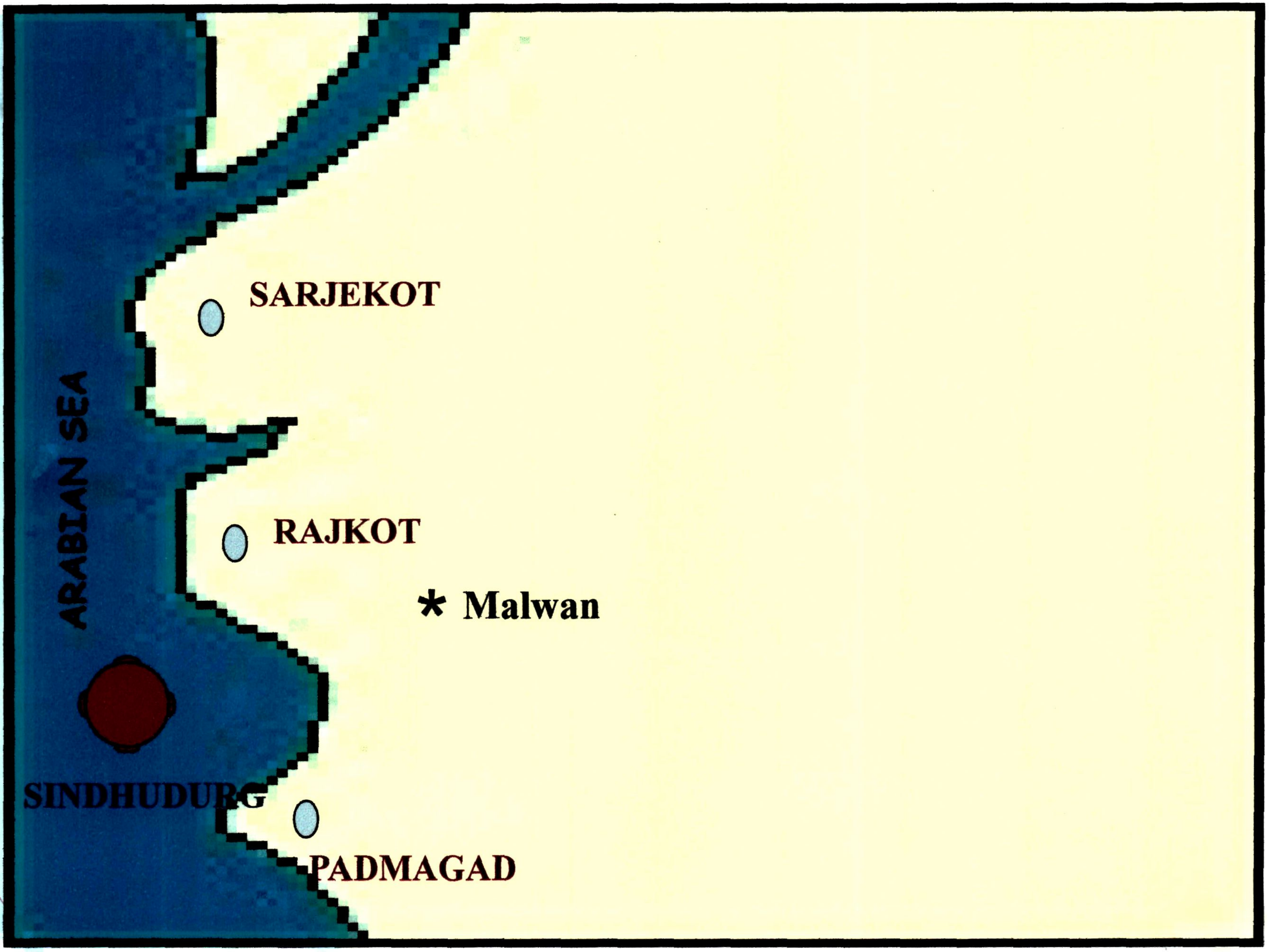
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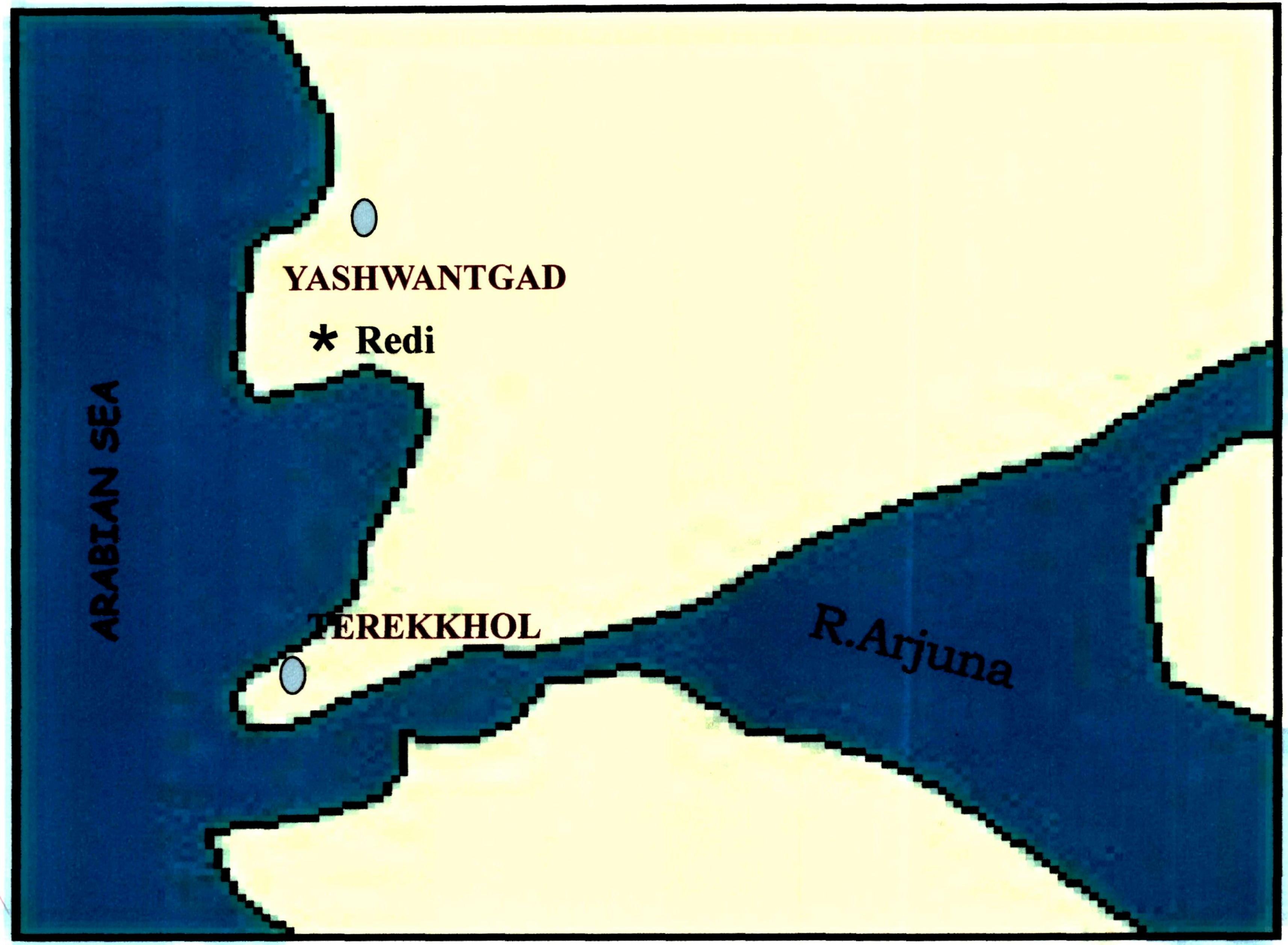
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3. THE GENIUS OF SHIVAJI

I

KONKAN COAST IN THE 17TH CENTURY -

India had been trading with Europe through land as well as through the Red Sea long before the beginning of the Christian era. This trade was particularly brisk during the first three centuries of the Christian era when the eastward expansion of the Roman Empire facilitated commercial intercourse between the East and the West. But the old trade routes through Egypt and up the Persian Gulf through Syria were closed in the seventh century when the Arabs conquered those countries. Thenceforward, the bulk of the overseas Indian trade was monopolized by the Arabs. The Arabs exploited their exclusive monopoly in the overseas trade between the East and the West, which annoyed the West. Furthermore, with the occupation of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, the overland trade routes fell under their control and became unsafe. As a result the Europeans were virtually compelled to stay away from this lucrative trade, particularly in spices, with the East.

The theory of Sea Power states that geographical and geo-political compulsions enable a nation to attain sea-power. In the 15th century, the virtual exclusion of the Europeans from the lucrative trade with the East, therefore, proved to be the driving factor for the European nations to initiate sustained efforts to discover an alternative trade route (essentially a non-Mediterranean sea-route) to the East/India. To Portugal, belongs the credit of the discovery. Prince Henry of Portugal, surnamed '*The Navigator*', inspired a succession of Portuguese sea-captains to accomplish this job, though the new sea route to the East could not be discovered during his life time[1]. In 1487, Bartholomew Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope and ten years later Vasco Da Gama succeeded in landing at Calicut taking the same route.

The Portuguese: The Portuguese, thus, were the first amongst the European nations to register their arrival in India via this new sea route. Vasco da Gama, under the patronage of the King Emmanuel of Portugal, explored a new sea route for India and landed at Calicut in 1453. It should be noted here that Vasco's small sailing ships (caravels), for his first voyage to India, were neither purpose built nor even the most suitable vessels for the journey into the unknown of such unprecedented duration. Admittedly, their sailing qualities, particularly their ability to sail close to the wind, were superior to those of most contemporary vessels and they had 20 canons between them, but neither they nor the tub like freighter that accompanied them could have matched the immediate impression created by the much large and more numerous ships of the Chinese Admiral Cheng Ho's fleet.[2] Vasco da Gama, anyway, was received with curiosity and courtesy by the local King Zamorin who also granted him certain trading privileges.[3] Vasco sailed back to his country after a brief stay of three months in India. These three months were crucial to his understanding of the politico-economic situation of that part of the Western Coast of India. He returned to India in 1501 with a definite purpose which was cleverly backed by 14 well armed ships.[4] The Arabs could not tolerate the Portuguese making dent in their share of lucrative profit gained from the Indian trade. The Arabs, therefore, immediately swung into action and declared war on the Portuguese with the help of the local potentates in 1502. Vasco, however, won a naval victory with a clever and effective use of the Portuguese flotilla of 14 well armed ships. The Arabs, according to Admiral Ballard, had some cannon of very short range, but the Portuguese secured windward position and so manoeuvred as to be able to bombard the enemy without ever taking them close enough to board: 'the weather gauge and long range guns won Vasco the day.[5] In this manner, a more numerous force of the Arabs and Malabar ships was defeated - an event which was destined to alter the political equation of the Indian Ocean drastically. Thus began the era of 'armed expedition', initiated by the Portuguese, in the Indian Ocean. The fierce demonstration of their naval prowess, at the same time, had earned them respect and won them allies on land. A beginning of landed settlement in India followed simultaneously with De Almeida's appointment as the first Viceroy of the Portuguese territories in India.

In the meanwhile, the Portuguese were on the way to establish their absolute control over the entire Indian Ocean as well. Albuquerque had been sent in 1506 to conduct war against the Muslims in the Red Sea. He seized Socotra, an island near the Red Sea, and built a fort there. He took and fortified Ormuz in the Persian Gulf, and sank every vessel in the port. He succeeded De Almedia as the Portuguese Governor (of Indian territories) in India in 1509. By that time Almeida had ensured that the sea route between India and Portugal remained under his firm control. In this process, the Portuguese naval proficiency was once again successfully demonstrated in 1509, when a combined naval challenge of Zamorin, Gujarati's and the Egyptians near Diu was successfully warded off by the Portuguese fleet.[6] Albuquerque had a more unwavering vision and was far more ambitious than his predecessor. He believed that the Portuguese could dominate the traffic of the entire Indian Ocean by capturing the strategic points and maintaining command of the sea[7]. At the same time, he was equally quick to realize that 'a domain founded on a navy alone cannot last'. He, therefore, embarked upon a policy of territorial conquest in India. Goa was conquered with the help of some Hindu support in 1510.[8] Goa provided a wide and sheltered harbour for the Portuguese ships. In 1511, he seized Malacca and laid the strong foundations of the 'Portuguese Power in the East'. After his death, his policy was followed by his successors. The Portuguese built a fort at Colombo in 1518, while in India their settlements grew at Nagapatam, San Thome, Chittagong and Hugli on the Bay of Bengal.

All this expansion did not go un-noticed and the native rulers soon realized the grievous challenge it posed to their sovereignty. When the Gujarat Sultan Mehmud Begda requisitioned the help of the Turkish ruler (in the year and reason) to put an end to the Portuguese menace, little did he expect that the Portuguese would prevail upon the allied force.[9] The battle had far reaching implications. The Portuguese became a power on the sea coast which gave them an undisputed command of the sea-borne trade in western India. During the reign of Bahadur Shah II, a Portuguese fleet commanded by Nano Da Cunha, bombarded Diu in February, 1531, but failed. In frustration, Cunha destroyed and burnt Tarapur, Mahim, Kelve, Agasi and even Surat.[10] However, Bahadur Shah could do a little against another Portuguese attempt on Daman with a heavy reinforcement from Lisbon. The Portuguese not only wrested Daman from him but also forced him to sign peace on humiliating terms. One of the terms of the peace read, "...that all ships bound for the Red Sea from the Kingdom of Cambay should set out from (Portuguese) Bassein; that no vessels should go to other ports without leave from the Portuguese; that no ships of war could be built in any of the ports belonging to the

King of Cambay..."[11] A of Gujarat tried to expel the Portuguese from the island of Diu but met with failure. A contemporary Mughal painting illustrates the finer aspects of this naval engagement.[12] The Portuguese, in turn, conspired against him and very soon captured Bassein from him. From Bassein, they started issuing Portuguese permits (*Cartazes*) to the Indian traders so that their trade should be under the Portuguese control. The Gujarati ships were forced to touch Bassein and pay customs dues to the Portuguese authorities. Very soon, Bahadur Shah was coerced to allow them to fortify Diu in return for the 'Portuguese help from sea and land' against the Mughal emperor Humayun.[13] It was from here that the Portuguese theory and claim of the '*sovereignty over the sea*' was floated. Moreover, the native rulers were prevented from fortifying their coastal settlements as the Portuguese portrayed themselves as their 'friends'. In the meanwhile, the resistance to the Portuguese power on the Indian land and waters continued. A Turkish fleet arrived at Diu in 1538 and joined the Gujaratis in laying siege to Diu, but it was not successful.[14] In 1570-71, Goa was attacked by the combined forces of Bijapur and Ahmednagar and the forts of Daman and Bassein were besieged by the Mughals in the time of Akbar, but the command of sea saved the situation for the Portuguese.[15]

The Portuguese remained the undisputed masters of the Indian trade in the 16th century. However, the 17th century saw a gradual decline in the power and prestige of the Portuguese in India. It was because a multitude of reasons. The most important being the corruption in their administrative set-up - the supervision of which was but difficult from Portugal. The second reason was the entry of other European players like the English, the Dutch and the French in the Indian Ocean. These were more modern and competitive in their outlook to have allowed the Portuguese to easily corner the benefits of the Indian trade. The third reason was the rise of the Maratha *Swarajya* under the leadership of Shivaji, which exerted more and determined pressure from the land side. In this way the Portuguese were entangled in a triangular conflict with the other European powers when Shivaji's *Swarajya* was conceived.

✓

The English: The 15th and 16th centuries were the age of geographical discoveries and cut-throat mercantilism. The British East India Company was granted a Royal Charter on the 31st of December 1600, with an exclusive right to Indian trade for a period of 15 years. As soon as it entered the Indian waters, it was challenged by the Dutch and the Portuguese. The Portuguese also thwarted the English attempt to get trading concessions from the Mughals who were the virtual masters of mainland India.[16] The English fleet, apparently in an attempt to demonstrate their naval might, soon contested the Portuguese near Surat. The brief naval fight between the two powers took place near Swally[17] in which Capt. Thomas Best, the commander of the English fleet, emerged victorious. The Portuguese prestige in India was given a severe jolt as they suffered heavy losses and the English came to be respected for their organized naval strength. What followed, therefore, was not un-expected. Sir Tomas Roe, as the Royal ambassador of the British Queen to the Mughal emperor, succeeded in securing numerous trading privileges for the English Company along with the permission to establish factories in different parts of the Mughal dominion, namely- Surat, Agra, Ahmedabad and Broach. For all practical purposes, the Company's settlement at Surat was granted the status of the Company's headquarters in India and the administrator of the factory at Surat, therefore, came to be regarded as the President of Indian settlements.

Unlike the Portuguese, who used power not only to coerce the native rulers for obtaining trading concessions, but also for territorial conquest in India, the English, by and large, behaved as peaceful traders and stayed away from interfering in the local political affairs, particularly in the first half of the 17th century. Isolated encounters of the English ships with Indian merchant ships, however, did occasionally take place for some reason or other. Interestingly, such encounters do provide us with an idea of the tonnage as well as arming of the Indian merchant ships to meet exigencies of robbery/piracy on the high seas. The English Factory Records mention an incident of the year 1625 in which a 250 ton Indian ship with 20 pieces of artillery and shots etc. failed to defeat a comparatively smaller and lightly armed English ship.[18] The English Company, on the other hand, kept on acquiring new settlements, thereby expanding its base in India. It also took advantage of the decay of the Portuguese power in the Indian Ocean region and snatched Ormuz (at the Mouth of Persian Gulf) form them in 1622. In the second half of the 17th century, the Company's character changed as the new charters empowered it to operate as a territorial power with the privileges of minting money, erecting fortifications, exercise of judicial rights over the English subjects and of making war and peace with the native rulers. In the meanwhile, the island of Bombay was also acquired from the crown[19] at a rental of mere 10 pounds on a yearly basis. By 1687 Bombay had been elevated as the headquarters of the company's settlements on the West Coast of India. The natural advantages and a secluded character of Bombay Island[20] were more suited for the Company's political ambitions.

The French had also registered their arrival in the second half of the 17th century, and together with the Portuguese and the Dutch, they posed serious competition and challenges for the English Company in Indian waters. However, it was the rise of Shivaji as the head of an organized and highly motivated Maratha force in the Western India that proved to be more troublesome to the English (more so because of the military pressure he could exert on the English settlements through his infantry; the sack of Surat being one such example). The interests of the English and the Marathas clashed in that region and the close proximity of the English settlements to the territory of Maratha *Swarajya* brought them into conflict on numerous occasions. More so, after the acquisition of Bombay and its development as the chief settlement of the Company, Shivaji had to devise ways and means to fulfill his political ambitions in the teeth of a strong opposition. For Shivaji, any hindrance to the realization of his goal of *Swarajya* was to be dealt with on a priority basis. Hence, it was but natural that he would be keen to keep these powers under check.

The Dutch: The advent of the Dutch in the East was not a sudden event but was a consequence of some earlier attempts by the Dutchmen to lodge themselves in this region. The visit of the Dutch traveler Van Linschoten to India as the secretary of the Archbishop of Goa in 1583 added further impetus to their adventure in the Indian waters. Kail writes, "When he (Van Linschoten) returned home in 1589, he carried sufficient proof to indicate that the Portuguese claim to be lords of 'conquest, navigation and commerce of Ethiopia, India, Arabia and Persia' was not as effective as the title assumed by King Manuel I in 1501, particularly in the vicinity of the Sunda straits and the island of Java in Indonesia, where the Portuguese had no effective control."[21] With the formation of the United East India Company of the Netherlands in 1602, the Dutch found their way to the Indian waters in a much organized manner. However, the entry of the Dutch to the Indian scene was more aggressive as they were backed by a charter which conferred on them the right to make war (particularly on the Portuguese), conclude treaties (with foreign powers), acquire territories and build fortresses, factories and strongholds.[22] It was obvious that the Portuguese, who were already on the path of decline, would be the first to experience the Dutch onslaught on their possessions in the East. The Dutch wrested the Indonesian islands from the Portuguese in 1619, successfully blockaded the Portuguese Goa in 1639 and subsequently captured Malacca in 1641. In India, the Dutch trading company entered into the good books of many native rulers (many of them avowed enemies of the Portuguese) including the Zamorin of Calicut, who permitted them to establish factories in their country. A Dutch captain, Van der Hagen landed at Calicut in 1604 and had a personal meeting with the Zamorin (11 Oct, 1604). The Portuguese made an unsuccessful raid on the harbour of Calicut at the same time with the understandable intent of frightening the Zamorin, so that he should not allow the Dutch to settle in Calicut. However, the outcome of the meeting was a treaty concluded between the Dutch and Zamorin which stipulated: 'A close alliance, eternal and unbreakable for the oppression of the Portuguese, and for driving them out of the lands of the Zamorin, and also out of the whole of India... A fortress would be built which would remain in the hands and under the domination of the Dutch all the time. Hagen's visit to Calicut brought about the first political understanding between the Dutch and an Indian prince'.[23] The treaty underlines Dutch policy in India - to ally themselves with Indian powers, to establish trading agencies and to openly attack the Portuguese whose monopoly of the Eastern trade they regarded as a grievance. Despite the Indian prospects, the Dutch were more attracted towards the lucrative trade of pepper and spices of the East Indies. They, therefore, competed fiercely with the Portuguese and the English and gradually established their supremacy and headquarters outside India.[24] Referring to the Portuguese sources on the Dutch-Portuguese rivalry, Om Prakash remarks that 'the decade of 1630s witnessed catastrophic losses to the Portuguese country traders at the hands of the VOC. The Portuguese losses between 1629 and 1636 were estimated at some 155 ships destroyed or captured, besides goods worth 7.5 million *xerafins* lost. The Portuguese also lost Nagapattinam to the Dutch in 1658'.[25] In India, Negapatam was designated as their headquarters after it was seized from the Portuguese in 1659. The Dutch were more organized and concentrated in the Malabar Coast as compared to the

Konkan Coast, which was the bone of contention between the various native powers and the Marathas under Shivaji. Hence, we do find a direct involvement of the Dutch in the affairs of the *Swarajya*. However, they were keeping a constant track of Shivaji's activities ever since Surat was raided by the Marathas in 1664. As per the Dutch accounts, during Shivaji's (first) raid of Surat in 1664, 'the only resistance offered was by Theodre van Adrichem, the Dutch director and Sir George Oxinden of the English factory, who barricaded their buildings and prepared to defend their property...the Dutch also gave asylum to the Mughal Governor. Aurangzeb recognized the courageous rescue of the governor and ordered that for a period of one year, the Dutch would be exempt from paying any custom duties in all their factories in Gujarat...'[26]

The relations of the Dutch Company with respect to the other European Companies like the English and the French, nevertheless, fluctuated wildly. The events of Europe, particularly those concerning war and peace between these nations, had a direct bearing on the relation between these companies in India and elsewhere. As a result, at times we find the Dutch working at tandem with the English and the French against a common enemy; and at times, we find them indulged in fierce military rivalry among themselves. For example, the Dutch tried to take advantage of the rift between Shivaji and the English (in the 1670s). The Dutch governor of Sri Lanka Rijkloff van Goens, opened negotiations with the Marathas, promising the assistance of the Dutch navy in capturing Danda-Rajapur, if Shivaji would provide 3000 soldiers for the conquest of Bombay.[27] We, therefore, can not generalize the trends of the inter-relations between these European companies, but it can be argued for sure that they were competing with each other for more than just economic advantages.

The French: The French were the last to enter and compete for the control of the Indian waters. As the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English had acquired immense riches by their eastern trade, so the French were also attracted towards it. The French East India Company was founded in 1664 and it established its first factory on the Indian soil in 1667 at Surat. When the French appeared on the Indian scenario, the western India, particularly the Konkan Coast was in turmoil. The humble beginnings of Shivaji's *Swarajya* had been made. Surat was sacked at ease by the Marathas making a mockery of the established Mughal rule in that part of India. The French company in India initially adopted a conciliatory policy towards the native rulers. The Company's representatives met Shivaji at Rajapuri in 1667 and obtained the permission to establish a factory there.[28] They also obtained permission from the Sultan of Golkonda to establish a factory at Masulipatam in 1669. Their course, however, was far from being smooth and they had to struggle hard to establish their foothold on the Indian soil. In 1672, they had a naval engagement with the Dutch over the control of San Thome.[29] The English, too, were not willing to let them settle down without hindrances. The fortunes of the French company were soon revived under the able command of Francis Martin who came as the Governor of the French settlements in India in 1672. He acquired Pondicherry in 1674 and it was gradually developed as their main centre in India. Like the Dutch, the French were also not concentrated in the Konkan Coast. Their area of interest and influence in India was the Eastern Coast, hence they were not as actively involved in the politics of the Deccan as the Portuguese and the English. This, however, does not imply that they were not interested in the affairs of Western India which housed their potential European trade rivals, the English. As the Maratha power further expanded in the early 18th Century, they came across the French more frequently for strategic requirements, and the French, as we shall see in the foregoing discussion, proved to be more than eager to comply with the Maratha or other native ruler's requests. The role of the French in the 18th century Indian politics was more clearly defined (because of the Anglo-French rivalry in the Carnatic) than their involvement in the 17th century. Ultimately, however, they lost to the English in this rivalry and became dependent on them.

The Mughals: The Mughal power was at its zenith in the opening years of the 17th century. All the territorial conquests had been consolidated. The composite culture as propagated by Akbar had practically broadened the Mughal base in India. The Mughal Empire took care to maintain a large standing army to buttress its authority; but it failed to realize the importance of guarding the sea-coast by building a strong navy. The Mughals, in fact, did not pay attention to the development of naval force before Akbar established his control over Gujarat in 1571. Right from the Mauryan period, down to the pre-modern days, the office of Admiralty, in general, has to perform certain functions to perform, such as: To ensure the supply of ships and boats for purposes of navigation, to ensure supply of men (supposedly well versed in the knowledge of the marine matters) for crew, to watch the river or other waterways, regulate tonnage, etc. and to administer and promulgate the imposition, realization and imposition of duties.[30] We indeed come across the references of a dedicated officer - Mir Bahr, in charge of the small fleets of boats maintained by the Mughals. At the same time, Abul Fazl also specifies at least a dozen categories of the crew employed by the Mughals.[31] Abul Fazl, though, mentions about the use of boats fitted with artillery for specific purpose,[32] but such references are meager and do not indicate towards any concerted attempt by the Mughal rulers to organize a navy. No doubt, Akbar and his officers were capable of raising and maintaining a powerful navy on the European style, but they did not perceive any kind of danger from the sea-route and thus remained negligent towards the formation of a powerful sea-going navy. As such they seemed to be more interested towards the maintenance of commerce in Bengal. In this way the 'essentially continental outlook' of the Mughal Empire prevented the foundations of an organized Mughal navy. Shah-Jahan did build a small coastal navy in Bengal and used it effectively against the Portuguese, but by that time the successors of Vasco da Gama had ceased to be major naval power in the Indian waters.[33] Mughals seemed to be more content with the profitable commerce of the oceanic trade and the safety of the Haj pilgrims from the West Coast of India. During the time of Aurangzeb, we find a slight departure from this continental outlook. May be, because of the political exigencies of the Deccan or otherwise that Aurangzeb was handed over the responsibility of maintaining the safety of the Western Coast of his empire to the *Siddi* of Janjira. The latter had cleverly transferred allegiance from the Bijapuri rulers to the Mughals in view of the rapid success of Shivaji against the Bijapur state. Moreover, the *Siddi* himself was hard-pressed by Shivaji who was exerting pressure on his coastal possessions from land as well as from the sea through. In this process Shivaji was making a gainful use of his recently raised naval fleet. In this way, we find that the Mighty Mughals had to enlist the *Siddi* of Janjira in their service as they themselves did not maintain an efficient navy. The *Siddi*-Maratha naval conflict occupies an important part of the Maratha history.

Bijapur and Ahmednagar: When the Portuguese made their appearance in India, the Vijayanagar empires was at the helm of its power in the south. In the Deccan, the Bahmani Empire had split up into five Kingdoms, namely - Berar, Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Golkonda and Bidar. In due course of time, the Kingdom's of Berar and Bidar were amalgamated by Ahmednagar and Bijapur respectably in 1574 and 1609. It was, therefore, obvious for the Portuguese to interact with these Kingdoms for trading concessions and privileges. But the Portuguese, instead of confining themselves within the limits of legitimate trade, became unduly ambitious to establish their supremacy in the eastern seas. In 1510, Goa was bombarded and captured by Alfonso de Albuquerque from Bijapur.[34] It was subsequently made the capital of the Portuguese India in 1530. On the other hand the Portuguese relations with the rulers of Vijayanagar were friendly.

By the close of the 15th century, the Kingdom of Gujarat under the command of Mehmud Begada had been exerting its power in the Konkan area. The prominent settlements at Daman, Bassein and Diu, etc. were a part of Begada's territory. As noted earlier in this chapter, he failed to prevent the Portuguese in establishing a firm foothold in the coastal waters of Konkan. The volume of coastal trade was also quite high and equally lucrative during that period. Dabhol, Chaul, Cambay and Diu were the most important ports engaged in coastal trade in the early 16th century. The Portuguese obviously eyed upon these important trading centers. In December 1508, the Portuguese governor Almeida wrested the port of Dabhol from the rulers of Bijapur.[35] The Adilshah of Bijapur further lost Goa to them in 1510. On the upper Konkan, Mahim was occupied next in 1516, and in 1521 the Portuguese captured the famous port of Chaul from the Sultan of Gujarat.[36] From the rulers of Gujarat, the Portuguese encountered the most determined resistance and both the sides often resorted to plunder and pillage. In 1531, Diu was sacked by the Portuguese and the following year Daman was burnt by them. All the towns from Bassein to Tarapur were subjected to indiscriminate plunder and arson. Bassein was finally brought under the Portuguese control in 1535.[37] The next addition was the port of Daman in 1558. With all these trading points under their control, the Portuguese system of *Cartaz* was effectively implemented. The system of *Cartaz* not only established the firm authority of the Portuguese in the Indian waters but also brought them immense revenue throughout the 16th century.[38]

Late in the 16th century, the Mughal imperial forces under Akbar had extend the Mughal boundaries up to the Deccan and had reached up to the frontiers of Ahmednagar. At that time the Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar was fiercely contesting with the Portuguese for the control over the Konkan Coast. To complicate the matters further, the death of the Nizam had initiated intense court-factionalism which led to almost a civil war like situation. Fortunately, however, for Ahmednagar, the able command of Malik Ambar provided a new energy. Moreover, the coming of the Dutch and the English Companies, and their open hostilities against the Portuguese in the Indian waters, provided further opportunities to Ahmednagar to forestall its decay. A treaty had been signed with the state of Ahmednagar which was the southern limit of the Mughal rule. But, early in the 17th century, the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan decided to expand the Mughal frontiers further south. As a result, military expeditions were dispatched towards Ahmednagar and Bijapur. The Mughals first succeeded in the wrapping-up the state of Ahmednagar in 1636. In the 1650s the pressure on Bijapur was mounted, and the most able Mughal prince Aurangzeb was deputed as the Mughal governor of the Deccan to supervise the military operations against Bijapur. However, owing to the illness of the Emperor and the ensuing war of succession among the contenders of the Mughal throne, the military operations against Bijapur were left incomplete by Aurangzeb, who rushed towards Delhi in 1656. Shivaji was quick to take advantage of the chaos prevalent in the Deccan region. To carve out a niche for himself, he also set out on a series of military conquests on his own.

II

SHIVAJI: SETTING THE KEEL AFLOAT -

Shivaji's destiny was being shaped at Poona by the inspiring statesmanship of his guardian Dadaji Konda Dev and ever encouraging mother Jija Bai. He was resolved to carve out an independent path of conquest and consolidation for himself for the cause of the Maratha people. Though it was a perilous course as he was not sure of the response or support of his own Marathi brethren, many of them commanding big positions under the neighbouring kingdoms, he decided to go ahead with the blessings of his mother.

He started his career of conquests from the surroundings of Poona as he had made himself familiar with the paths and defiles of the hilly country in and around Poona. He found the adjoining hill forts in a state of utter neglect as regards maintenance and garrisoning. There he realized his possibilities, and embarked upon a systematic acquisition of the most prominent of them. It is significant to put on record here that he applied both of the means, viz. force as well as deceit, to win over these forts and succeeded in his objective in due course. Since the area of his conquest was not, in any way, crucial or strategic to the grand system of the Bijapur state, the Bijapur authorities did not really suspect Shivaji's intentions and just asked Shahji Bhonsle to keep his son's activities under check.

A more vigorous policy of conquests was initiated by Shivaji after the death of Dadaji Kondadev in 1647. Credit goes to Shivaji for having chosen such areas for his conquest and consolidation in the initial phase which were not only far away from the Bijapur capital but were also comparatively unsettled in the wake of the dissolution of Ahmednagar. In short, it was the upper-Deccan region (the erstwhile Ahmednagar territory) which was zeroed upon by Shivaji for his military conquest. This was the region, which though conquered by the Mughals, was not consolidated by them. The jurisdictions of the Mughals and Bijapur were still overlapping in this region. The Konkan region, particularly the northern part was a part of this area. Shivaji found an opportunity and added to this confusion by formally collaborating with Aurangzeb, the Mughal Viceroy of Deccan, who was looking for a pretext to wipe-out the Bijapuri Kingdom. Fortunately for Shivaji, Aurangzeb had to rush to Delhi for the ensuing war of succession. The departure of Aurangzeb provided Shivaji (on the basis of his offer to serve the Mughals) the very pretext to his claim that he was seizing the Konkan territory for the Mughals.

The circumstances under which Shivaji undertook the conquest of the northern Konkan further gives an insight of the brilliance of his stratagem. It should be noted that by that time the southern reaches of his own *Jagir* of Poona had been well consolidated by way of the conquest and proper garrisoning of the fortresses of Torna, Rajgad, Simhagad and Purandhar. The whole plan of action seems to be carefully conceived as Shivaji had also stopped payment of the yearly dues to the Bijapur state (more so, to his father on the plea that the heavy expenditure on the maintenance of the *Jagir* did not leave him with any surplus to be sent to him.[39] Shivaji seems to have started behaving as an independent authority by the time he actually embarked upon the conquest of Konkan in 1656. D. V. Apte has argued that the year 1656 marks the beginning of the independent career of Shivaji.[40] The records further suggest that Shivaji had appointed Shamrav Nilkanth, who understood Persian language, to the office of Peshwa. Further, for the proper administration of the area under his control, he nominated Ragho Ballal Atre to the post of *Chitnavis* (Secretary) and another person of the same name to be his military accountant, and then raised some new troops, stated to be more than twenty-five thousand in numbers.[41] The administrative instructions of Shivaji for his conquered territory could be found from the year 1657.[42] By that time, the Mores of Jawli had been eliminated and Mahad Ghat, the only pass between the Koyna valley and the Konkan, was secured with the masterful strategy of erecting a fort (Pratapgad), 1000 feet above the Koyna valley. In this way, Shivaji ensured that he was totally secured from any military threat from the eastern side when he was reducing the Konkan and extending the frontiers of his *Swarajya* up to the western sea coast.

The keenness of Shivaji to possess the sea coast of Konkan coast could be well established from the fact that he, professing himself a servant of the Emperor, entered into a correspondence with Aurangzeb, at the time when the latter was on the point of commencing war against Bijapur (in the wake of the death of the Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah in Nov, 1656). It is equally interesting to note that Aurangzebg 'really listened to his overtures, assented to his keeping what he had wrested from Bijapur, and, with the alleged right of the Emperor to dispose of that Kingdom, consented to a proposal from Shivaji of taking possession of Dabhol and its dependencies of the sea coast'.[43] The Factory Records of the British East India Company also refer to the political chaos of 1656 at the Bijapur court and present the picture in this manner: 'Shahji Bhonsle made himself practically independent in his new possessions, while his son Shivaji openly defied his nominal sovereign by attacking Janjira (Danda-Rajapuri)'.[44] A Portuguese letter of the year 1657 also makes a mention of Shivaji's conquests on the Konkan Coast by recording, "Shahji's son has taken possession of Upper Chaul".[45]

At the same time when Shivaji was trying to establish his military and political authority over the Konkan Coast, he came across the maritime powers entrenched at various pockets on the west coast. He seems to have quickly comprehended the cause of their success and dominance. Shivaji, therefore, immediately planned for his own naval establishment. This was indeed a practical and well-calculated decision that speaks volumes of a political genius who would not only like to scrupulously guard his political fortunes, but would also like to add to the economic fortunes of his nascent *Swarajya* by an organized use of the navy. The first ever definite information regarding Maratha naval activities come from a Portuguese document of the year 1659 which, apart from the other things, also mentions that the Maratha shipbuilding activities had commenced at Kalyan-Bhiwandi.[46] It is indeed true that one of the pressing compulsions behind laying the foundations of the Maratha navy, in the words of Sabhasad,[47] was the desire of the Chattrapati to subdue the *Siddi* of Janjira. But, in the hindsight, it must be admitted that the prudence of the visionary were wide; and that the presence of the European maritime powers on the Western Coast were too evident to be ignored by a genius of Shivaji's caliber. After all, his long term ambition was to establish a sovereign authority of his own.

III

NAVY OF THE *SWARAJYA* AND ITS DEFINED OBJECTIVES -

(A) **Need for a Navy: Military, Commercial or other considerations** - When Shivaji started exercising sovereign authority over his nascent *Swarajya*, he came across the Europeans in the Konkan waters.[48] With his natural inquisitiveness and his desire to gain a wider understanding of the world around him, he missed no opportunity to study the caliber and the outlook of the Europeans. He admired their spirit of adventure, took note of the advances made by their respective nations in the weapons and mode of warfare, and appreciated the tenacity of purpose which generally governed their activities. Furthermore, his long and animated conversation with Manucci, the Italian artillery officer in the army of Jai Singh in 1665, on a wide variety of subjects, testifies to a mind that was at once alert and awake.

As a part of his policy of expansion, Shivaji was determined to extend his sway over the Konkan and enhance its resources. The capture of Kalyan and Bhiwandi by Shivaji in 1657 gave him a firm foothold in the Konkan and provided him the requisite incentive to realize his ambition. In the coastal surroundings, it must have been the perceived threat from the potent quarters (particularly the Europeans) that impelled the great visionary to set the keel afloat immediately in the waters of Kalyan-Bhiwandi in 1657. At the same time, he must have come to know about the helplessness of the native coastal rulers (with the exception of the Mughals), who, in the matters of Oceanic and coastal navigation, were constantly exposed to the merciless exploitations of the naval fleets belonging to some of these European nations. The Portuguese were claiming '*sovereignty over the sea*' and enforcing their injunctions on the Indian Ocean as a whole since the early 16th century. The '*Cartaz*' system established by them had virtually brought the Indian shipping and navigation, particularly on the western coast, under their monopolistic control. This system served, not only as a source of income to the Portuguese, but was also a well-conceived method adopted by them to project their uncontested naval supremacy over the Indian Waters. It seems, therefore, that Shivaji's natural desire behind the foundation of the Maratha navy was to resist such pressure-tactics of the Europeans and, at the same time, challenge it by the use of an organized fleet. In this context, it is important to take note of the observations of Ramchandra Pant Amatya. On the importance of navy Amatya writes, "Navy is an independent limb of the state. Just as a King's fame for success on land is in proportion to the strength of his cavalry, so the mastery of the sea is in the hands of him who possesses the navy. Therefore a navy should necessarily be built."[49] Hence the genuineness of the objectives behind the raising of Maratha navy becomes intelligible at the very outset.

It is clear, therefore, that sovereignty of sea and the projection of Maratha military might over the coastal surroundings were the first and foremost objectives of Shivaji, which he wished to achieve by putting into use an organized navy. Though he faced a severe crunch of resources and was also hard-pressed in the teeth of hostility of the neighbouring rulers (from the land side), he was undeterred. He was well determined to secure the freedom of the seas along the coastal extent of his *Swarajya*. Hence, despite obvious limitations, ship-building activities were undertaken, though in a cautious manner, initially. Shivaji was shrewd enough not to have aroused any kind of suspicion in the minds of the Portuguese Governors of adjoining Thane/Bassein region when he began boat-building enterprise at Kalyan-Bhiwandi. Not only did he declare that his naval establishment was meant for struggle against the *Siddi* chiefs of Janjira, but also requested the Portuguese authorities to supply ammunitions and equip his vessels. The contemporary Portuguese documents make us believe that the first 20 armed ships of Shivaji were constructed with the help naval experts (shipwrights etc.) who were of Portuguese origin.[50] Even at a later stage many Portuguese craftsmen were found working for the Maratha navy, particularly assisting in ship-building. It is said that through his minister Pitambar Senvi's influence (who was well posted in the affairs and rivalries of these European traders and knew how to read and write their language), Shvaji borrowed the services of a few naval and artillery experts from Goa and established his own ship-building yards and arsenals at Malwan.[51] It is interesting to note that Jai Singh, the Mughal commander, who was deputed by Aurangzeb to '*clip the wings*' of Shivaji, had, on one occasion asked the Portuguese authorities 'to refrain from working for Shivaji'.

Simultaneously, with the construction of a chain of coastal and island fortresses, navigational security and logistic support to the Maratha sea-going vessels were made available. To Shivaji, it was thus evident that neither the security of his realm nor its progress could be ensured unless he built up a navy of his own. In the early part of the 16th century, Albuquerque, the Portuguese governor, had successfully established a maritime empire in the Indian Ocean. Though the Portuguese ruled the sea, they had made no attempts to usurp sovereignty on land. It was apparent that while the presence of the Portuguese fleet offered no menace to native powers, the trade they brought was extremely desirable. Yet, the Kings of Gujarat and the Deccan coast varied between fear and favour towards the foreigners: and twice at least the great combined attempts were made to annihilate the Portuguese fleets which were frustrated with stubborn valour. The Portuguese fleet had remained supreme since then. It is interesting to note that even in the second half of the 17th Century, the activities of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British and the French in India were confined - to a great extent - to pursue their commercial interests, apparently undistracted by territorial ambitions. As noted in the beginning of this chapter, they fought amongst themselves bitterly to seize the monopoly of the abounding trade and, being largely preoccupied with considerations of profits and dividends, their activities, mostly confined to their coastal settlements, aroused neither jealousy nor fear. Even in the period prior to the arrival of the Portuguese on the Konkan coast, overseas contact was a crucial component in the commercial activities. From early times the Konkan coast had attracted international trade - though in a lesser volume as compared to the Gujarat or the Malabar Coast. The rationales for the importance of the Konkan coast are not too difficult to trace. In the first place, it must have acted as outlet to its hinterland of Maharastra and Gujarat with easy accessibility through trade routes; and secondly, it also afforded sheltered sites to the ports because of the peculiar geomorphologic features. In the words of Dr. Ruby Maloni, "A peculiarity of the Konkan ports was that their location was not on the shores of the sea, but on the creeks in the interior. Navigable estuaries and creeks provided shelter against storms and pirates. Cargoes could be transported on the waters of the deep creeks, which were protected form erosion by the thick forests of the Sahyadri. There was also the facility of possible inland water connections between different ports." [52]

The Konkan port towns like Dabhol, Rajapur, Karwar, Bhatkal and Vengurla etc. lying between Bombay and Cochin (more particularly between Gujarat and Malabar) transacted enormous business particularly after the arrival of the Europeans in the Indian Ocean. There are many references of the indigenous people trading in partnership with the Europeans too. An example, corresponding to the reign of Shivaji, can be cited here of a ship owned by a Parsi merchant in partnership with a Portuguese trader Reynardson, which called at the port of Rajapur. The ship was loaded with betel nuts and coconuts.[53] These ports had also acquired considerable importance and affluence by exporting a wide variety of goods, of which spices and textiles were the most conspicuous. It made sense, therefore, for any ruler who controlled this stretch of the coast to try and get maximum advantage by a proper administration/regulation of these ports. For the sake of records, it was primarily the economic motive that dominated over any other cause of the rivalry between the Ahamednagar and Bijapur Kingdoms throughout the 16th century. Moreover, the concerted attempt of the Portuguese to capture and dominate Konkan on the one hand, and the determined resistance of the Bijapur and Ahmednagar against them on the other, could well be appreciated in the light of economic motives.

It was innate that Shivaji could not have risked overlooking or undermining the economic prospects of the Konkan region. At the same time, he would have wanted to tap them in the interest of his newly founded *Swarajya* which was in need of finances to stand up on its own. In this respect, a national navy would have definitely helped to realize his cherished ambition. Hence, from the very outset, his policy in the Konkan was clear and well defined. Not only did he want to secure his unchallenged supremacy over this region by defeating and expelling the agents of Bijapur and of Mughals, but also desired that the coastal trade should prosper without disruptions, whatsoever. In the *Rajniti* of Ramchandra Pant Amatya, the objectives of the commercial policy have been highlighted in the following manner, "Those merchants who reside in the foreign countries should be persuaded to come and settle ... by sending an assurance of safety to seafaring merchants at various ports, they should be given the freedom of intercourse in trade."[54] At the same time Shivaji seems to have entertained no thoughts of excluding any of the European traders or trading companies from participating in it, so long as they did not take undue interest in non-trading or local political issues. A fine testimony of Shivaji's desire to accommodate the Europeans in trade and other commercial activities comes from the accounts of a contemporary French traveler Abbe Carre, who writes, "In fact along the stretch of the sea where he (Shivaji) was the master, there never passed a ship of Europe to which the governors (of those coastal areas under Shivaji) did not send refreshments with all the good offices that could hardly be expected by an allied prince. I passed that way in 1668 with two ships of the company and we were treated in a manner which was beyond our expectation. It was an act of his policy, but it was also due to the preference he felt for the people of Europe..."[55] The nature of hospitality extended to the Europeans thus, testifies the desire of the great Maratha ruler to promote the commerce of his realm and ensure that his *Swarajya* prospered. On the other hand, Ramchandra Pant Amatya appears quite cautious when he elaborates on the state policy regarding the Europeans. He writes, "Their (i.e., the traders belonging to the European countries) intercourse should be restricted to the extent of only their coming and going (for trade)...therefore, if any place is at all given to them, it should be given in the midst of two or four famous great towns distant about eight to sixteen miles from the mouth of the sea...thus by fixing their place of habitation factories should be permitted to be built..."[56] V. B. Kulkarni, a leading biographer of Shivaji, has aptly summarized Shivaji's policy towards the Europeans traders thus, "Shivaji's dealings with the European traders in India were marked by caution and kindness and, at the same time, by a determination not to allow them to encroach upon his *sovereign* rights."[57] It was indeed impossible for him or any of his contemporaries to foresee that one of these trading communities was destined to impose its sway over the length and breadth of the country.

The prospects of overseas trade and commerce were indeed lucrative; hence it could not have been disregarded either by individuals or by the state. As a matter of fact, the keenness of the great Maratha to reap the rich harvest of overseas trade has been recorded by the contemporary European observers. The English Factory Records of the year 1662 report thus, "we are informed that (at Jaitapur port, some two miles up the river from Rajapur), Shivaji was fitting out two vessels of considerable burden laden with ... which he intends to send to Mocha.[58] The participation in the local salt and rice trade must have been considerable as these were the most essential commodities (Salt making and salt trade at Uran, Karanja, Pen, Panvel;[59] Basrur rice etc. were important.[60] A British letter of the year 1670, gives us an idea about the personal/private trade carried, in fact, by none other but the Admiral of the Maratha navy. The letter mentions, "The General and Admiral of the fleet (of the Marathas) is one Ventgi Sarung...(to whom I) wrote a civil letter wishing him good success in his voyage, and promising him what assistance lay in my power in lading three of his own ships that are here (at Bombay) to take in salt..."[61]

The oceanic, or for that matter, even the coastal navigation was not free from risk. If not the threat of the ships of the enemy country, equally intimidating were the pirates and interlopers belonging to various nationalities. The contemporary Portuguese, English or Dutch records are full of such references of interlopers. ***It is understood, therefore, that some kind of a minimum protection to the mercantile fleet would have called for the presence of armed boats/navy etc. with each convoy.*** At the same time, the *Swarajya* could have attracted traders and commercial activities only if the coastal waters were made absolutely safe for plying of the trading vessels. Revenue could have poured in if the commercial activities were brought under control of the state apparatus. The *Rajniti* of Ramchandra Pant Amatya specifically mentions, "Harbours should be well protected: otherwise in the cases of need, necessary and useful things could not be brought from foreign places. If this happens, then what remains of the prestige of the Kingdom? There would be a loss of customs duties and other income...Trade should be increased. Trade will cause the growth of income from customs."[62] A careful scrutiny of the above mentioned passage leads us towards the conclusion that the Maratha authorities were concerned not only for the expansion of trade, but were also equally concerned about any possible cause of the loss of revenue. Hence, not only the big merchants, or, for that matter, the foreign merchants were favoured, but the local traders and even the *Koli* i.e., the fishermen community were provided proper facilities including protection during their movements.[63] Given the nature of land and agricultural productivity of the Maratha *Swarajya*, it was but natural for the ruler to look for alternative sources of revenue. Though, we lack definite information about the nature or magnitude of taxes collected by Shivaji's administration from the ports, we come across evidences of different types of customs/port duties being collected by the rulers who exercised their authority on the coastal areas in the Deccan. An Adil-Shahi document of the year 1636 enlists the following taxes being collected from the port of Mustafabad (Dabhol): (a) *Tapavan* - 50 *hons*, (b) *Bhavar Gast* - 125 *hons*, (c) *Gambani* - 125 *hons*.[64] In the absence of any contemporary document of similar nature, however, we are not in a position to determine the enormity of the customs rates or port duties. Shivaji, it seems, had fixed high tariff on the foreign goods[65] in order to promote and protect the local trade. He must have wanted the local traders and manufacturers to ply from his ports and marts by offering lower tariffs, as he was in the process of establishing a naval system for his nascent *Swarajya*. Once the navy of the *Swarajya* was full-fledged and up to the required strength, a progressive taxation would not have been a bad idea. After all, he was providing the merchants - facilities and protection, in the age of rampant piracy. We must keep in mind that owing to the various kinds of risks involved in the seafaring activities, the Europeans, by that time, had already started the process of insurance of the vessels along with their goods.[66]

Yet another probable use of the vessels for economic purposes could have been by way of subletting the cargo space to various small traders and earn money. In the 16th & 17th centuries, subletting of the cargo space by the ship owners in return for payment for local or point to point trade was a normal practice. In fact, it has been suggested that in the Indian waters, even the Europeans competed with the native merchants/ship-owners as far as subletting of the 'extra' cargo space was concerned. Ashin Das Gupta points out that though the freight rates of the Europeans were high as compared to their Indian counterparts, the Indian traders 'preferred' them because of the better quality of vessels as well as proper arrangements of security on board these vessels to take on the high-seas pirates.[67] The Maratha *Swarajya* under Shivaji would also have taken advantage of the situation by committing certain number of vessels exclusively for this purpose. After all, Amatya also warns, in no unambiguous words, about the catastrophic implications in case the naval establishment was maintained out of the income derived from the ports and exactions form the merchants.[68]

In addition a strong flotilla of boats was required for the purpose of retrieving and obtaining flotsam/jetsam (add footnote) which, as per rules and traditions, belonged to the coastal rulers. In conclusion we may say that the main concern of Shivaji behind building a navy was, **more than anything else, the strong urge of the great Maratha warrior and strategist to carry out his struggle by every means** so that his long cherished dream of carving out a niche for himself and the Maratha land could materialize.

(B) Extent of Ship-building activities and an estimate of the naval fleet -

The long stretch of the coast forming the natural frontier of the newly founded *Swarajya* in the west, pressed Shivaji to arrange for its proper defenses. This could have been possible only with the help of a chain of coastal and island forts as well as an operational navy which could guard in the coastal waters. According to Sabhasad, the sea-going (naval) ships and the sea (marine) forts were the two arms of Shivaji's navy, uniting which he 'saddled the sea'.[69] It should be made clear at the very outset, though, that Sabhasad, or for that matter any other contemporary Marathi chronicle, do not subscribe any particular date to the commencement of the Maratha naval enterprise under Shivaji. It is assumed that the building of vessels was immediately commenced once Kalyan-Bhiwandi was captured in 1657-58. A Portuguese letter of the year 1659 happens to be the first documentary record which tells us with certainty the year when Shivaji started building his naval fleet.[70] This letter not only expresses the genuine apprehension of the Portuguese authorities towards such an activity, but also tries to ensure that the Maratha ships could not set sail to the sea without the Portuguese consent and permission. This letter also mentions Kalyan, Bhiwandi and Panvel as the Maratha ship-building centers. More references of Maratha ship-building activities could be found in the European documents of the succeeding years. On the basis the information contained in these documents, we may ignore the assumption of Cosme da Guarda, the Portuguese biographer of Shivaji, who writes that Shivaji started his naval enterprise after his escape from (the Mughal confinement at) Agra.[71] In fact, before his military rendezvous with Maharaja Jai Singh, the Mughal Commander of the Deccan, Shivaji had started the construction of the marine fort of Sindhudurg and had also got many of the coastal forts repaired. Hence, work on the naval enterprise was in full swing when Jai Singh arrived in the Deccan. It may be inferred here that Shivaji apprehended such an action by the Mughals, hence he wanted to secure the outlet towards the sea in case he faced a critical military threat from the land side.

Apart from the defense requirements of the nascent *Swarajya* from its natural enemies like the *Siddi* - operating from the island fort of Janjira, the coercive commercial practices of the European trading companies[72] were also in the hindsight of the Maratha genius when he started constructing his own vessel under the shelter of the natural creeks under his control. Furthermore, the projection of the political authority through the naval force, indeed, would have matched his sovereign status in the coastal surroundings.

We have had a discussion of the naval bases, sea and coastal forts and their strategic importance in the preceding chapter. We will now try to form an estimate of the numerical strength and quality of the Maratha naval vessels under Shivaji. While accounting for the numerical strength of the Maratha navy during Shivaji's time, however, we have to be particularly careful on two accounts:

(1) We are talking about a pre-modern naval system where there was very thin line differentiating the vessels intended for purely commercial purposes and those meant for typical naval fights of that age. Most of the vessels, therefore, were designed principally to protect merchant shipping and to help repel invasion of the enemy;

(2) Occasional, and very few references are appended to in the contemporary Marathi chronicles (most of the Marathi chronicles, which were composed long

> after the death of Shivaji, often tend to mislead by exaggerating the number of the vessels) whereas, the Europeans sources have summarily discarded the Maratha navy by tagging them as a small group of 'wretched country vessels' intended for piratical purposes.

Notwithstanding these variants, it should be understood that navies have been built around battle fleet and that at the beginning of the naval contest, the battleship remain their primary component. During naval fights, therefore, all possible attempts were made to prevent any loss of one's own battle ship and destroy as many of the enemy as possible.

It can not be denied that the major concern of Shivaji, when he undertook the construction of boats in the creeks of Kalyan-Bhiwandi, must have been to set afloat, as far as possible, specialized ships that would be primarily committed for warfare against the 'identified enemies' viz. the *Siddi* of Janjira, affiliated (at that point of time) with the Bijapur Sultans. Even Sabhasad records that the main aim of the Maratha navy was the destruction of the *Siddi* of Janjira, who were like 'rats in the house.'[73] Even a contemporary Portuguese document records that Shivaji, after having constructed his first 20 armed ships with the help of artisans of Portuguese origin, had declared that these ships were built to meet the menace of the *Siddi* of Janjira.[74] Logically, therefore, these vessels must have been designed to withstand damage, and to inflict the same on the enemy. It is doubtful whether Shivaji had the requisite resources and the technical know-how at the time when he initiated the Maratha naval enterprise. We have evidences contained in the Portuguese records to suggest that Shivaji undeniably lacked, if not resources, the requisite technical competence in the beginning. He, therefore, had to request for the Portuguese help as far as the construction of the 'first 20 armed ships'[75] of the Maratha navy is concerned.[76] In addition, we have references in the English Factory Records that Shivaji needed the active help of the English flotilla in his endeavour to capture the coastal stretch around Danda-Rajapuri from his avowed enemy, the *Siddi* of Janjira.[77]

The English factors in India also record the movement and activities of the Maratha navy under Shivaji from time to time, for they were the ones who were directly influenced by the outcome of the conflicts between the coastal powers. Though the Factory Records do mention the numerical strength of the Maratha fleet at various points of time[78] but, at the same time, they do not mince words in unfolding the 'deplorable' condition of the Maratha vessels.

Sabhasad Bakhar, the most reliable of the various *Bakhars* on Shivaji, provides us with a rough estimate of the numerical strength of the Maratha navy. The *Bakhar* also divulge details regarding the different types/categories of vessels of the Maratha fleet, which helps us to outline the spirit of the Maratha naval enterprise under Shivaji. Some other contemporary Marathi chronicles also list the different types of Maratha vessels along with their nomenclature. This is indicative of the fact that vessels for specialized purposes, keeping in mind the naval-strategy of the state and varied requirements thereof, were built by Shivaji. For example, flat bottomed boats would have suited the specific purpose of being used in the shallow and rocky waters of the various creeks; small rowing boats would have been employed for towing the heavy vessel (particularly from the coastal forts and bases) which could attain speed once it used sail after reaching out in the open waters etc. and deliver offensive on the enemy. Sabhasad writes, "Ships of various types, such as *Gurabs* and *Tarandes*, *Tarus*, *Galvats*, *Sibads* and *Pagar* were fitted and organized under two *Subedars*...A *Suba* consisting of two hundred ships."[79] As per this statement, the total number of boats (of various types as enumerated above) at that particular point of time seems to be somewhat around four hundred. Though Sabhasad does not assign any specific date for the commencement of the construction of the vessels, but going by the chronology of events, it seems likely to have been initiated before Shivaji set out on an expedition to punish the Desai of Kudal, Lakham Sawant. The Desai, of late, had started giving troubles in the Maratha territory of South Konkan. Sabhasad follows by recording the success of the Maratha fleet against the *Siddi*'s, "A battle was fought between them (the Maratha fleet) and the *Siddi*'s fleet, and the *Siddi*'s vessels were captured. Many (naval) battles were fought... so that *Tarandes* (of the *Siddi* fleet) could not sail in the sea."[80] Another very significant inference to be drawn from the above statement of Sabhasad is regarding the element of bargain, followed by the 'capturing of each other's ships during the naval battle'. In January 1665, Shivaji's fleet captured some Mughal ships bound for the Red Sea. The acts of destruction/damage and capture of the opponents' vessels constituted to be the basic principles on which the Maratha naval strategy was based. This was literally true in respect of the ongoing struggle between the Marathas and the *Siddi* of Janjira. While Shivaji was bent upon the total destruction of the *Siddi* power, primarily based on the foundations of naval power, the *Siddi* chief could manage allies and sympathizers like the Mughals, the English[81] or (even) the Portuguese[82] on his side as and when required. In the 1670s, the direct involvement of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb along with the Mughal imperial fleet, from the side of the *Siddi*, further intensified the rivalry between the Marathas and the *Siddi*. As a result, the naval conflicts between them became fiercer and increasingly inhuman. A letter of the EIC written in December, 1672 mentions, "...King Aurangzeb having sent a fleet of 30 sails of small frigates from Surat to assist the *Siddi* of Danda-Rajapuri against him (Shivaji) by sea, which fleet hath done him much mischief, burning and destroying also about 50 of his vessels..."[83] This incident also finds mention in the chronicle of Khafi Khan in the following manner, "The (Mughal) fleet sailed down (from Surat, under the command of Khan Jehan) to Janjira. One night it attacked the vessels of Shivaji and captured them with two hundred men. One hundred Maratha sailors were killed by tying stones to their feet and throwing them into the sea. From that day the animosity between the *Siddi* and Shivaji grew more violent. The Raja built a new fleet and there were frequent naval fights (between them)..."[84]

A naval battle of that period, however, was confined only to inflicting damage or destruction of the opponent. But the practice of capturing enemy's ships and crew as war trophy/booty also constituted an important element of the naval battles. For the Marathas, who were severely handicapped by the paucity of resources and time, this was indeed another method of projection of force and dread in the heart of their competitors in the Konkan waters. It should, however, be made clear that the same practice was adopted by the European Companies against each others too. This used to be a means of harming their opponent's interests and, at the same time, further their own. Let us understand it by way of suitable examples: first of the Marathas with respect to the European Companies, and then, of the European Companies. As per the Portuguese documents, Shivaji's fleet, on one occasion, seized as many as 121 trading ships from the Karnataka ports of Honavar, Mangalore, Barcelore and Gangoli (Cambolim).[85] In addition, it has been frequently noted by the Portuguese factors that the Marathas were in the habit of capturing and detaining their ships. However, such acts were reciprocated by the Portuguese too. Not only were the cargo vessels, but the naval warships too, were being targeted by each side. In a Portuguese letter of March 1665, there is a reference to a battleship of the Portuguese (*navio*) having been captured by Shivaji's fleet. One more Portuguese warship (*Pataxo*) was taken captive by Shivaji's fleet in November 1670, while it was sailing from Surat to Daman. In retaliation, the Portuguese captured eleven unarmed Maratha cargo ships and took them to Bassein...[86] It is clear that such acts of hostility were committed by both the sides. Such acts (of capturing each other's ships) might well have arisen as a result of violation of terms of treaty/agreement viz. plying of ships without the possession of valid passes, evading customs/port duty or unlawful entry into each other's sphere of influence, etc., by either side. Moreover, those 'prized trophies' would have probably served the purpose of bargain (as an indispensable part of an unambiguous policy) so as to extract some explicit favour from each other. Such favours ranged from severing relations with the enemies to the supply of provisions or ammunitions (we have many references of the Marathas denying vital supplies to the English or Portuguese from the land side and at the same time Shivaji requesting the Europeans to supply guns, shots and other ammunitions). Since the nature of relationship between the Marathas and the Portuguese were officially friendly and that they refrained from being 'avowed enemies' to each other, let us suppose that the boats so confiscated were returned back to each other. But, when we talk about the *Siddi*, there could have been no question of returning back the 'prized trophies'. The point is that, the strength of the fleet of Shivaji could have increased or decreased depending upon the objective and success of the campaign as well as the strength and quality of opponent he fought with. Hence, we cannot simply take for granted the numerical strength of the naval fleet of Shivaji to be four hundred which were further 'divided into two units of two hundred vessels each', as reported by Sabhasad. In fact, Sabhasad gives another (and much higher) figure of the Maratha fleet elsewhere in his narration. He writes, "...in this manner seven hundred ships were (put into) organized in the sea."[87] It may be possible that the number, as suggested by Sabhasad, could not have exclusively corresponded to the vessels of the fleet constructed in various dockyards/bases of Shivaji in such a short span of time. Construction of such a large number of vessels required, in addition to time, resources and professional expertise too. Even if we accept as true, this number, it is certain that all of the vessels so constructed could not have been large enough or specialized or so adequately equipped that they fall into the category of ships purely meant for naval wars. Besides, we have to take into consideration the allies/subordinates of Shivaji too, particularly from the coastal areas, who might have counted as far as the numerical strength of the Maratha fleet is concerned. One such ally, worth mentioning, is the Koli[88] chief, who played an important role in the reduction of the Jawhar Rajas.

The contemporary Portuguese documents further help us to have an estimate about the different kinds of vessels that constituted the Maratha naval fleet. A letter written by the Governor of Goa in April/May 1662 reads, "...Ragho Ballal, the (Maratha) Subedar of Dabhol, had requested him to allow five warships (*Sanguiceis*) and one *Pataxo* interned in the Karanja creek to go out to the sea..."[89] Another Portuguese letter written by the Captain of Chaul to the Governor of Goa in August, 1664, mentions that Shivaji was building fifty ships in upper Chaul and that seven of them were ready to set out to sea.[90] Many letters of the British EIC in India also provide us with information of similar nature. At times they tend to specify the quantity in respect of the different types of the Maratha vessels while they furnish details about the naval encounters. Some of those examples can be quoted here to emphasize our point. There was a struggle for the possession of Kalyan-Bhiwandi between the Marathas and the Mughals. It seems that it was wrested by the Mughals within a couple of years of its capture by Shivaji. It remained with the Mughals for nearly a decade. The Marathas had recaptured Kalyan-Bhiwandi in early 1670 and retained it. The ship-building activity seems to have been immediately resumed by Shivaji at Kalyan-Bhiwandi. A letter of correspondence between the Bombay and Surat Factory of the English East India Company dated 02nd of December 1672, reports, "We thought good to advise you that here is laid up in our harbour (i.e. Bombay) six small boats belonging to Sevagee with his consent, all new and late(ly) built at *Cullian - Bundy* (Kalyan-Bhiwandi)..."[91] This particular incident assumes importance in the light of the fact that the *Siddi*, at that time, was being assisted by the Mughals with a formidable fleet - a large portion of which was constructed at Surat.[92] While the hostility between the Marathas and the *Siddi* continued unabated in the coastal waters of Konkan, another English record apprise us of the numerical strength of the Maratha fleet. It mentions, "Of the 60 or 70 vessels spotted...some came into Bombay harbour, and others 'kept the mouth of our port 2 or 3 days."[93] Obviously the English administrators of Bombay were keeping a close watch on the naval activities of the Marathas. Under such circumstances, an outcome, favourable to the Marathas, would have put at risk not only the various English Factories on the Malabar Coast but also Bombay, which was gradually gaining prominence.

So important was it to maintain the required number of the fleet, that Amatya had suggested methods to avoid any loss to it because of the enemy activities. Amatya writes that even when the naval ships were sheltering in a creek, well defended by a fort at its mouth, "the fleet should not be kept in one place, it should be distributed in various places; and in the night - patrolling both by creek and by land - should be done round about the fleet."[94] This philosophy (of distributing the vessels in various places) of Amatya finds its proper usage during the time of Shivaji and has been confirmed by the English sources. A letter of Bombay addressed to the Governor of the English Factory at Surat says, "...we are certainly informed that Shivaji, with a considerable fleet, is at Nagaon (creek) about seven leagues off of us, where he has made provisions for a siege or storm..."[95] The reference of the presence of the Maratha fleet at Nagaon could also be found in the contemporary Portuguese documents. A letter written by the Portuguese Captain of Chaul, dated 25th March 1677, states, "...Shivaji's fleet was stationed at Nagaon: there were ten *Galvats* and thirteen other ships."[96] The creeks could have served the purpose well only if the land adjoining it was under the control of the naval power. Though the undefended coast was always exposed to the depredations and firing of the navy, there was a bigger risk of the vessels placed in such creeks being damaged or destroyed by way of bombing or fire caused by the power which commanded the land adjoining the creeks. Nagaon or Nagothana, or for that matter any such creek was threatened from land; therefore, it was important to occupy them, as Shivaji did. It was the absolute control of the coast-line by Shivaji that discouraged the *Siddi* to winter his fleet in the Konkan creeks. *Siddi* was left with no option but to be always dependent on the British Bombay for the same. On the other hand the authorities at Bombay, at times, were reluctant to allow the *Siddi* to use their harbour. To deal with such a situation, the

Siddi tried to take Karanja, a small island near Bombay, apparently for the purpose of wintering of their fleet, but apparently.[97]

When the Portuguese came to India, large ships were being built at Calicut and Cochin on the Malabar Coast, and around Masulipattanam and Calcutta. With the arrival of the Portuguese in the Indian waters, war-ships had undergone notable changes in terms of technique and equipment (especially guns). At the same time, the Portuguese were very well aware of the desirability of building ships in India. It was felt that the Indian made ships were certainly stronger, if not always cheaper. On an average, Lisbon built ships seldom made three or four round voyages or lasted barely a decade whereas the high quality of Indian teak made the Indian vessels long lasting. Therefore, experts argued in favour of India-made ships and the King of Portugal frequently made legislations for building ships in India.[98] Though various methods of boat-building have been described in various sources (ancient as well as medieval; Indian as well as foreign accounts), direct references from the region under the Marathas are quite scarce. However, in a study undertaken by Kirti Jain, an attempt has been made to throw some light on the boat-building traditions among the Son Kolis (a fishing community scattered along coast in the present district of Raigad, Maharastra). It seems that not many changes have occurred in the manner of building a boat since the time the Arab travelers had settled down to the Indian coast for trade and adventure. Jain writes, "The construction of a boat starts with the lying of keel, a massive piece of teak timber supported on a branching stern about a foot above the ground at both the ends. This is stepped up to take the stern post and also the stem post, which also are massive pieces of timber. The length of the stem, stern and the keel depends upon the posed length, width and depth of the vessel. The keel is laid first and later the planks or ribs are attached. Usually the wood used for the stern is one piece. For the keel too, a single piece of wood is preferred. The planks are then fastened horizontally on either side of the keel. These planks are bent to the requisite curve over a slow fire started by burning of old rope coated with tar. Ribs of naturally bent wood are shaped and fitted alternately to suit the curve, and then secured the keel and the planks...The planks are joined by placing them side by side and by caulking them, the sealing agent being a mixture of resin and sweet oil taken in a ratio 1:2

and boiled till the mixture reaches a one thread consistency. Coconut husk or hemp could have been used for the purpose of sealing the planks tightly."[99]

(C) Naval troops and Administration of Naval Establishment -

During the era of the Roman Empire, their naval forces included legionaries for boarding actions. These were the troops, primarily trained in land warfare, and did not need to be skilled at handling a ship. Much later during the age of sail, a component of marines served a similar role: being ship-borne soldiers - who were used either during boarding actions, as sharp-shooters, or in raids along the shore. On occasions, naval vessels have also served simply as troop carriers or supply ships. When Shivaji initiated the naval enterprise of the *Swarajya*, it was obvious, therefore, that he was guided by the pragmatic considerations. He was building a navy from the scratch, as he perceived real danger for his *Swarajya* coming from the sea-side - first from the *Siddi* (for a contest to get a foot-hold along the coast) and secondly from the Europeans (for commercial and other considerations). Since the era of specialized naval warfare was still far ahead, hence, all he needed was to amass a good number of vessels and troopers, at least for the purpose of deterrence. Shivaji was far ahead of his contemporary rulers when he started working on these lines. He was, at least, thinking of securing his coast on the oceanic front which was not on the preference list of the mighty Mughals. The Mughals indeed had a sizeable flotilla which served as the means of localized force projection, particularly in the river routes and traffic in the eastern parts of India. But it could not be compared with anything which consisted of organized navy of the age of the sail. In the matters of Oceanic adventures, or even the annual Haj pilgrimage to Mecca - where the Mughals were more concerned about the safety of their vessels, they were content to hand over this responsibility to a third party on payment. If we believe the English records, the *Siddi* of Janjira were contracted for providing protection to the pilgrim ships going to Mecca in return for an annual salary (*Tankha*) of one lakh rupees. In addition the responsibility of Mughal Admiralty was also bestowed upon the *Siddi* chiefs in perpetuity. The *Siddi* performed this obligation till the year 1759 after which the English EIC was contracted for this job for the same amount.[100]

As a matter of fact, the main purpose of the navy was to fight naval-battles and keep the enemy at bay in the vicinity of the coast. However, the contemporary Marathi chronicles approve of raids and plundering activities by the naval force in the enemy's (Mughals, Europeans etc.) territories. Sabhasad writes thus, "The Raje's ships began to plunder the cities and forts at various places belonging to the Mughals, the Firangs, the Dutch, the English and the Kilatav, and twenty-seven such sea powers, as well as various sea coast towns as Bednur, Sunda and Srirangapattan and subsist. They fought at various places and used to bring the Raje grains and other provisions, after providing for their own needs."[101]

Naval forces are typically arranged into units based on the number of vessels included - a single vessel forming the smallest operational unit. Vessels may be combined into squadrons or flotillas, which may be formed into fleets. The largest unit size may be the whole Navy or Admiralty. Sabhasad *Bakhar* provides us with definite information regarding the Admiralty of the Maratha navy. The *Bakhar* reads, "He (Shivaji) appointed two Subedars, a Musalman Subedar *Darya Sarang* (i.e. Sea Captain) by name and Mai Naik a *Bhandari* (by caste), constituting a Suba of two hundred ships..."[102] Another piece of information of similar nature comes from a letter of the British EIC, dated 21 November 1670. It reads, "The General and Admiral of the fleet (which consists of 160 small vessels counted by my own servant, who I sent as a spy) is one Ventji Sarung with whom I have a correspondence these 7 or 8 years..."[103] It is interesting to note that the number of vessels under Admiralty, as reported in the above mentioned contemporary source, is not very different from the quantum (consisting a naval unit) as specified by Sabhasad under one Subedar. Moreover, the originator of this letter claims to be in touch with the Admiral with the name Ventji Sarungee for the last 7 or 8 years. This letter also confirms that one 'Ventji Sarungee' was the head of the Maratha navy during the initial years of its foundation. This 'Ventji Sarungee' must have been the same as Darya Sarang of the *Sabhasad Bakhar*.

It can not be denied that Shivaji must have faced a practical difficulty while recruiting the men for his navy because of the Hindu religious injunctions in the matters of seafaring activities. As per the Dharamshastras, not only was the sea-voyage considered a taboo - hence banned, those who violated this ban were required to undergo severe penances. Those who came from across the sea were despised as the *Malechchas* or the untouchables. This injunction must have acted as a deterrent, more so - in the case of the Brahmans, or, may be, for the whole of the community of the '*dvija*' i.e., the twice born (comprising of the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas), who would not dare do anything in contravention of the religious law. Although we do not have any reliable data on the caste composition of the administrators/officers and the crew of the Maratha navy under Shivaji, it could be safely assumed that owing to the prevalent Hindu practices and traditions, there might have been only a few takers for the naval services from the populace belonging to the Brahman and Kshatriya castes. Such a situation must have been a big constraint for the naval establishment of Shivaji which, in a traditional sense, was surely shorn of the shrewd administrative expertise of the Brahman ministers and the dare-devil courage of the Kshatriyas. All these impediments at a time when the Maratha naval enterprise was in its infancy!

We come across the names of Mai Nayak Bhandari and Darya Sarang as the two Subedars of the Maratha naval establishment.[104] If we look at the caste status of Mai Nayak Bhandari, we find him coming from the lowest rung of the Maratha society. The people of the Bhandari community were usually engaged in their hereditary profession of toddy tapping and few of them were also employed as boatmen.[105] The other Subedar of Shivaji's navy was Darya Sarang, who was neither Hindu nor even a Maratha. He was a Muslim. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the Bhandaris did not have a history of distinguished expertise in the seafaring activities or professionalism in seamanship.[106] *What is even more fascinating is that a Muslim was given the responsibility to practically lead the struggle intended to establish a 'Hindu Empire'*! This limitation faced by Shivaji and his navy has been explained by many a scholars as a 'secular policy' of the great Maratha genius, which, in terms of ground realities, is difficult to justify. The Maratha naval struggle was primarily focused against the Muslims (Mughals or *Siddi*). Hence, Shivaji, through his recruitment policy, proved that the interest of his *Swarajya* was above all the considerations. He was guided more by pragmatic considerations rather than an absolutely secular approach, when he was recruiting the crew for his navy. His recruitment policy, in other words, was driven by the urgency and exigency of the requirements of the job he had undertaken. His prime motive for having a Maratha naval enterprise was to suppress the *Siddi* nuisance without delay. The *Siddi* needed to be kept under check if the coastal frontiers of his *Swarajya* were to be secured. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Shivaji employed *Siddi* Misri (another *Siddi*) to fight against the *Siddi* of Janjira.[107] In the contemporary documents, we come across references of other Muslims, presumably at pivot positions, in the naval service of Shivaji.[108] He would have, however, tried his best, in the given circumstances and constraints, to attract the ablest of the talents form the upper caste Hindus and Marathas to the naval services of the *Swarajya. In consideration to the traits of a true leader - who always leads by self-example, Shivaji also participated, in person, in the Basrur naval expedition of 1665 - undertaken during the formative years of the Maratha naval enterprise.*[109] He was urgently in the need of brave and able bodied men, who would be ever willing to risk their lives for the sake of the Maratha *Swarajya*. Those volunteers, of course, needed to have purely secular considerations and be above the mundane considerations of caste or creed or even the fear of 'pollution'. This was indeed a big ask in the 17th century Indian society. How far was Shivaji successful in his attempt, can not be ascertained with conviction in the absence of corresponding data, but the attempts of the Great Maratha indeed speaks high of his leadership quality and a firm determination for the sake of a worthy cause.

To accomplish his 'declared' objective of the destruction of the *Siddi*, Shivaji needed a large number of boats/ships and equally hefty number of crew to man them. Sabhasad, in fact, gives a rough estimate of the number of vessels built, and, at the same time makes a mention of the coastal and island forts that were constructed or repaired to support the naval vessels. But, he does not inform us about the procedure of recruitment of the men for the Maratha naval establishment. Shivaji seems to have taken into confidence the Kolis i.e., the fishermen community of the Konkan coast, to enhance the energy and efficiency of the Maratha navy. With their help, Shivaji made an attempt on the Ghodbandar too.[110] Traditionally, the Koli people were engaged in the fishing activities in the coastal waters with their peculiar boats (dug out) and fishing nets. They had, therefore, the absolute knowledge of the nature of sea in the surroundings with the precise location of the submerged rocks, reefs and sand bars.[111] Their services, therefore, would have been in great demand by the Maratha navy, especially in the initial phase, for they would have constituted the bulk of the crew to practically maneuver the boats and ships in the coastal waters as the 'expert' sailors. It can also be assumed, at the same time, therefore, that these sailors were different from the 'fighting crew' of Shivaji's navy. As noted earlier, in the pre-modern period, the naval warriors did not require any special expertise as far as the fighting skills were concerned. The naval fights basically involved ramming each other vessels (in order to sink them) or boarding the enemy vessel and have a close quarter battle (physical duel) with the enemy soldiers. There is a strong probability, therefore, that a majority of the fighting crew consisted of the people form the Bhandari and Koli caste and even the Muslims. In addition to managing the ship and constituting as the fighting crew, the services of these people could also have been utilized for the purpose of boat-building. A study of the *Son Kolis* a fishing community scattered along the present Raigad district reveals that they have preserved the tradition of boat-building with their community.[112]

For the naval vessels and the naval contingents thus recruited, sheltered anchorages were also the pre-requisites. With this objective in view, many coastal forts with maritime value, on the Konkan Coast were repaired and refurbished. To pose a determined challenge to the Abyssinian chiefs of Janjira, Shivaji also decided to have a maritime fortress of his own which would serve as his naval headquarters. For this purpose, a survey was ordered to be made. The shores of Malwan were chosen as *they reportedly possessed all the conveniences and requirements of naval strategy*. Thus, the mighty marine fortress of Sindhudurg on the shores of Malwan was conceived. It can be safely presumed that the traditional people belonging to the boatmen and fishermen community etc., who were well acquainted with the condition of coastal waters and its hydrographic features by the simple logic of their life-long experience and interactions with those waters, would have been the obvious choice for such an ambitious and equally crucial project of the *Swarajya*. The same considerations must have been there when soundings were to be taken in the off-shore waters before the construction and fortification works could commence on the island fortress like Suvarnadurg, Khanderi etc. It would not amount to any overstatement if we draw from the above discussion that the class of these maritime people who were the natural 'experts' of the nautical affairs, were encouraged to be a part of the Maratha naval apparatus in various capacities. That

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their expertise was instantaneously required for the complex maneuvering of the naval vessels during the time of actual naval engagements can not be doubted. It could only be those people who, by reason of their precise knowledge of the bottom of the coastal sea along with their knowledge of the nature and behaviour of the tidal pattern of the sea at different points of time (a pre-requisite to facilitate the entry/exit of a vessel to a port etc.), must have played a significant role in the naval engagements at tactical level.[113] As brought out earlier in the same chapter, the 'sailing crew' could have been different from the 'fighting men', hence the role of the hereditary boatmen and fishermen class as an integral part of the Maratha Naval troop could not be undermined.

As regards the salary or the mode of remuneration of the crew during the age of Shivaji, once again, absence of specific data prevents us from reaching any definite conclusion on this aspect of the Maratha naval administration. The contemporary document, the Royal Edict of Sambhaji II, prepared by Ramchandrapant Amatya, while elaborating on the Financial Policy, notes that "(State) Servants should be paid well and without any reluctance," and that "...salary should be paid according to rules..."[114] The same document also discusses about the administration of the forts at length and instructs, "In every fort salary, treasury, military provisions, and other kinds of articles necessary for forts should be collected and stored."[115] This implies that the entire establishment of the fort and the persons on the payrolls of each fort would be paid through local arrangement i.e. through the *Havaldar* or the chief administrator of that very fort. *By logic, the administration of the coastal/naval forts should not have differed from the general administration of the Maratha hill and other forts.* We have, therefore, valid reasons to speculate that the naval forts/bases must have catered for the payments of the defenders of the forts along with the sailors or marine troops attached to each naval fort. As such, the ruling on the naval policy was that the naval fleet should not be concentrated at one place and *as far as possible*, should be distributed in various places (naval forts/bases.[116] Though Amatya raises an eyebrow on the 'heavy expenses' of the naval establishment of the state and warns against the catastrophic consequences of any attempt to meet out the expenses of the navy from the income derived from the ports, the heavy expenses he is referring to is not merely on account of the salaries of the Maratha crew, but also relates to the charges defrayed towards the construction and equipping of the naval vessels. He, therefore, comes up with two solutions to meet such expenses:

(a) Revenue of a particular territory to be appropriated for the expenses of the navy.

(b) The naval forces to be maintained in proportion to the state income (from various sources, particularly trade and customs).

The second suggestion must have come as a big limiting factor for the maintenance of the required number, and more importantly, the quality of the vessels of the Maratha fleet. However, Amatya and Sabhasad are unanimous on the point that to meet the cost of maintaining a navy (as well as to instill terror in the hearts of the enemy), the enemy territory could be plundered.[117]

(D) Operation and Bases of Shivaji's Navy -

A national navy practically operates from one or more bases that are maintained by the country or an ally. The base is a port that is specialized in naval operations, and often includes housing for off-shore crew, an arsenal depot for munitions, docks for the vessels, and various repair facilities. During times of war, temporary bases may be constructed in closer proximity to strategic locations, as it is advantageous in terms of patrols and station-keeping. Nations with historically strong naval forces have found it advantageous to obtain basing rights in areas of strategic interest. The Portuguese activities in the 16th century, in the Indian waters, justify this view point. As Albuquerque, the Portuguese governor of Goa, considered that the commerce of India could not be acquired either by peaceful methods or by alliances, he proposed to have strong fortresses (naval bases) at various points like Aden, Ormuz, Diu and Goa. Such strategically important points have been referred to as the 'choke points' by Pearson.[118] Albuquerque also realized the bare truth that the Portuguese (in India, or any other place outside Portugal) would never be strong enough to engage an enemy on sea and land at the same time, and that, under such circumstances, the ships must be laid up and the forts properly defended.[119] The Portuguese, in fact, had come across the spirited resistance of the Indians and their allies as soon as they arrived in the Indian waters. They were in no mood, therefore, to be complacent as far as protection and furthering of their economic interests were concerned. It had been the constant endeavour of the Portuguese administrators, therefore, to occupy and strengthen naval bases in India.

Talking about Shivaji, his decision to construct a navy from the scratch, and to maintain it as an independent department of the Maratha *Swarajya*, appears to be a premeditated policy decision. In the vicinity of his coastal possessions, he was faced with the challenge of European naval powers like the Portuguese, who, though on the verge of decline in India, were effective nonetheless. In addition the English, the Dutch and the French had significantly altered the naval equations and operations in the Konkan waters ever since their arrival in India. Shivaji seems to be fully conscious of the fact that for a navy to operate and function properly, naval bases were the prime requisites. He realized it well that during the time of naval fights, the naval bases act as the most immediate source of supply of war materials and also the place of safe refuge for the fleet in case of adversity. The bases, if properly fortified, and with ample store of water, ammunition and garrison, would successfully stand against the attack of any enemy. At the same time, the artillery and guns of the naval forts (on the coast) would keep the creek or bay safe for navigation. They would thus, discourage the enemy ships from entering the sea/channel or the river lane on which they stood. With all such considerations in mind Shivaji immediately undertook the noble project of construction and repair works of the coastal/island forts - which were to act as the bases for the Maratha navy, as soon as the political extent of the *Swarajya* reached the Konkan coast. At the same time the shipbuilding activities were pursued at a brisk pace. The vessels were properly equipped and manned to take on any adversary in the coastal surroundings of the *Swarajya*. The work on the first of his naval forts, named Sindhudurg, commenced as early as 1664. This fort played the role of the Maratha naval headquarters and could be likened to be the coastal capital of the Maratha *Swarajya*.

As such, Shivaji's naval enterprise began with the capture of Kalyan and Bhiwandi in the year 1657. The *Jedhe Karina* mentions thus, "In the *Hemalambi* year *Shaka* 1579, an expedition was undertaken against the Portuguese at Kalyan Bhiwandi...Kalyan and Bhiwandi were captured, the Portuguese possession plundered and a post at Aseri was established. The Portuguese agreed to pay a *khandi* and a quarter of gold every year. Shivaji fortified the creek at Durgadi...He also made Kalyan a naval base and built dockyards."[120] The brilliance with which Shivaji comprehended the geopolitics of the region is worth admiring. On the one hand, enough of good quality teak was available in the surroundings of Kalyan - which could be utilized for the purpose of ship-building; on the other, the fortification of the creek of Durgadi would have afforded the much needed military and strategic protection to Kalyan which was destined to play the crucial role of a dockyard in the immediate future. The theory of military warfare, it should be remembered, also states that ***secured bases are necessary pre-requisites which facilitate the military leader the freedom of action against the enemy***.

The Portuguese were the first to record the ship-building activities of Shivaji in the area around Kalyan. A letter, dated 16th of August 1659, of the Portuguese governor of Goa addresses to their King reads thus, "The son of captain Xagi (Shahji Bhonsle)...has taken over the lands near Bassien and Chaul is getting powerful, and forces us to be careful, as he has built a navy in Bhiwandi, Kalyan, and Panvel - ports in the district of Bassein..."[121] It is interesting to note that the *Jedhe Karina* has also recorded that Shivaji founded *Shivpattan* at the foot of Rajgad as well as strengthened the defence of Prabhalgad (which was east of Panvel).[122] Specific information about the ship-building activities of Shivaji in the Kalyan-Bhiwandi waters can also be found in the English Factory Records. A letter dated 22nd of October 1672 records, "Wee have thought good to advise you that there is laid up in this harbour six small vessels, belonging to Shivagee with his consent, all new and lately built at *Culian Bhindi* (Kalyan Bhiwandi)..."[123] The above cited reference updates us about the importance of Kalyan as a ship-building centre during the heyday of Shivaji.

Simultaneously with the ship-building activities at Kalyan, Shivaji had also catered for the support system of his naval enterprise. His priorities were now to provide naval bases for safe anchorage of the various kinds of ships where the repair and maintenance works could also be undertaken. For an effective operation of his naval ships, naval bases were the key requirements. Such bases established at different parts of his coastal possessions. In this way, Shivaji worked on the principle that ***secure bases constituted the necessary foundations for power upon the sea***. Ramchandra Pant Amatya highlights the importance of the naval forts in providing strength to the indigenous fleet and offering protection to the ships and sailors. He writes, "Whatever may be our strength ...our fleets should be brought under the protection of sea-forts. The safety of ships and sailors should never be risked."[124] In consideration of the above, therefore, many naval forts were constructed along the coast of Konkan; and those which already existed were occupied or captured and then suitably strengthened.[125] Sabhasad, too, justifies Shivaji's decision of undertaking the construction of marine forts in the light of his constant pre-occupation against the *Siddi* of Janjira. The latter could not be subdued despite earnest military attempts of Shivaji, as he (the *Siddi*) had the island fort of Janjira under his control. Sabhasad writes, "Rajapuri was left (unconquered by Shivaji) in the sea and on that account the name of the Nizamshahi still continued there. As that place had to be conquered, the Raje built forts selecting (for their site) rocks at various places, as these commanded the sea and (these forts) would weaken the sea kings. Realizing this, he fortified some submarine rocks and constructed forts in the sea. Building such sea-forts or Janjiras and uniting ships with forts, the Raje saddled the sea."[126] The most significant aspect of Sabhasad's narration is '*uniting ships with forts*'- which indeed highlights the importance of naval bases for an effective operation of naval fleet. The Europeans, as we will discuss in the subsequent pages, had been working on the same principle ever since their arrival in India.

The comments of the contemporary French traveler Abbe Carre further highlight the strategic significance of the sites which were selected for maritime forts by Shivaji. Carre writes, "He (Shivaji) selected the maritime places as they were easier to defend and more difficult to attack."[127] Amatya's narration further upholds the keen observation of Carre as he writes, "On account of the fear of the fort, the enemy should not enter the creek of the sea."[128] It must have been the prime endeavor of Shivaji, therefore, to ensure that suitable arrangements to strengthen the defenses of such marine establishments, which acted as naval bases also, were made on a priority basis. It is interesting to note that in principle, there was no difference as regards the rules of construction, pattern and layout of the marine forts with respect to the hill or other forts. In case of a coastal fort, usually a strategic location was chosen on the coast which would command the nearby creek or port. We find gun holes and port holes on the ramparts of most of the marine forts. Guns and canons were fitted on most of these forts to keep at bay the enemy ships, approaching by sea/creeks. Most of the coastal forts were built in such a manner that from three sides they was surrounded by water and form the land side, to make them unapproachable, wide and deep moats were dug around the thick wall. Such forts were to have adequate space, provisions and facilities to maintain a large garrison for a longer duration. The Portuguese records suggest that Albuqerque, the governor of Portuguese Goa, planned to have 'a garrison of 500 to 1000 men in each fortress; 300 men for each factory and 1600 for the fleet'.[129] It should be remembered that the absolute control of the Portuguese over the Indian waters in the 16th and 17th centuries was very much facilitated by their naval bases at Gujarat, Chaul and Goa. The Portuguese armada operated from these bases and compelled the Indian ships to purchase the Portuguese passes for navigation in the coastal waters. Pearson has, in fact, argued that 'whereas the Portuguese armed vessels could enforce their authority by compelling the Indian ships to touch Daman or Diu, pay taxes, and then proceed to their onward journey, the Indian rulers of the coast failed to do so in the absence of an organized armada'. In this respect, Shivaji tried to impose his sovereign authority over the coastal waters of Konkan by asking even the European ships to buy the Maratha passes, and thus earned money. Here, it must be noted that by doing so he not only disallowed the loss of revenue to the *Swarajya*, but also augmented his own collections as the native merchants were, until then, buying passes from the Europeans. In this connection Amatya has also outlined a specific policy towards merchant ships. He writes, "If the ships of foreign merchants, besides those of the enemy, not possessing permits are coming and going, then they should not be allowed to move without inspection."[130] He further writes, "...if any merchant ships coming from the hostile territory are found in the sea, they should be captured by making great efforts (and) brought to the port..."[131] ***It can not be contested, hence, that for the projection of sovereignty over the coastal waters, a strong and effective flotilla was required. Moreover, the requirement of naval bases at appropriate locations would have further helped in doing so, as 'any hostile ship' had to be captured and taken to the nearby port or base so that it could be dealt with suitably.*** It is not very clear whether Shivaji was in a position to ask European/foreign ships to compulsorily touch any particular Maratha port or base in the absence of an effective flotilla and strong naval bases, at least in the initial phase of his nation building. However, contemporary European documents have enough records to show that the capturing of each others' ships was not an uncommon practice. Moreover, the documents also point to the fact that the Europeans, indeed, were buying Maratha passes and avoided being openly hostile to Shivaji. This was good enough, a beginning, for Shivaji. We should remember the fact that Shivaji did not want to really antagonize the Europeans as far as their maritime activities were in accordance with the commercial practices prevalent at that time. Hence, his policy towards the Europeans, as discussed elsewhere in this chapter, was marked by '*caution and kindnesses*'. *Shivaji, therefore, was not adamant on asking the foreign ships to touch his bases or get them searched as he did not want to pick up a direct naval fight with them so long as his purpose was served.* Moreover, in the back of his mind, he was also aware that the Maratha navy, at that point of time, lacked fire power, and could not have competed well with the Europeans in an open naval-fight. On the contrary, only the Europeans could have helped him in acquiring guns and ammunitions which were urgently required for the Maratha vessels and the marine forts. Last, but not the least, he was still very much preoccupied with the *Siddi* nuisance, which he wanted to put to an end to, on a priority basis.

For the purpose of maintenance/overhaul of the ships, forts had special function to perform. Ramchandra Pant Amatya writes, "The sheltering (of the naval ships) should be done only in fortified ports... sheltering should be done every year in a different port which has got a fort facing the sea."[132] To fulfill this criterion, Shivaji had to contest for the control of a few strategic coastal forts with his enemies. One such fort was the fort of Chaul, originally built by the Portuguese, which was destroyed and captured by Shivaji in the 1672.[133] Describing Chaul, Thevenot, a contemporary traveler, writes 'Chaul was very difficult to enter but very safe, sheltered from every kind of weather'. We may also understand the reasons for the fortification of the desolate island of Khanderi by Shivaji in the light of his failure to take the island fortress of Janjira from the *Siddi.* Bases were the requirements of every European Trading Company - operating miles away from their native territories. These Europeans were always keen on having such places which would afford them protection against the compelling enemies either on land or on water. An example may be taken of the rise and growth of Bombay. As soon as the British EIC got the possession of Bombay[134], a desolate island in the year 1668 ..., works on its fortification were immediately undertaken. The English factory records of the year 1669 mentions about the triple layer of fortification and garrisoning of Bombay.[135] The work of fortification was speeded up in the wake of the (second) sack of Surat by Shivaji in the year 1670.[136] Surprisingly enough, the British East India Company went ahead with the plan of fortification of Bombay knowing well that all the navigable channels to Bombay from mainland Thane were totally under control of the Portuguese authority stationed at Thane, and that no supply food/fuel or otherwise could reach Bombay (from the mainland via sea channels) without the 'permission' of the Portuguese governor. Moreover, Bombay was just a desolate island which was dependent on the Company's factory at Surat for practically everything concerning administration. Still, the fact remains that not only was Bombay strongly fortified, but its defenses were also strengthened by bringing under control all the fordable creeks like, Mahim, Sion etc. To top all, the construction and repair of vessels were gradually undertaken at Bombay which further complemented it as a naval base.[137] We have further information that gunpowder was also being manufactured and stored by the British at Bombay in good quantity.[138] The defenses of Bombay were further augmented by way of the permanent deployment of specialized naval vessels in and around Bombay. This was intended to tackle the menace of the 'pirates of Malabar'. *In this way, for the British naval operations in western India, the Bombay fort proved to be a 'naval base' in real sense.* Sincere attempts were made to augment its natural defenses by various means, particularly after the transfer of the Headquarters of the British Company from Surat to Bombay in the year 1687. We should also remember that Bombay acquired fame as an excellent dockyard only after the decline of Surat. However, much before that, the *Siddi* of Janjira ~~could~~ be found sheltering his fleet at Bombay, especially during the rainy season.[139]

As regards Surat, it was undoubtedly Gujarat's and India's premier port city at the turn of the 18th century. It was the house of a large mercantile marine, unsurpassed in the whole Indian Ocean. It housed the mercantile establishments of various merchants coming from different nationalities. It was also known for its shipbuilding activities, though, in the absence of records, not much is known about the exact rate of production or tonnage or nature of the vessels during the 16th or 17th century. But, it cannot be denied that the vessels ferrying between the Gujarat ports and the Red Sea were overwhelmingly Indian. We get frequent references in the 17th century Dutch documents regarding the fame and importance of Surat as a ship-building center on the Western Coast of India. It is apparent that the Europeans (particularly the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English) placed orders at Surat (at Gandevi) for different types of ships.[140] It seems that many of the vessels so constructed in Western India (under the orders of the local rulers) catered for some sort of defense mechanism in view of rampant piratical activities. One such example is of the Mughal ship *Ganj-i-Sawai* which was mercilessly plundered by the (English) pirates in the year 1694. It is a fact that the Mughals were never interested in escorting their mercantile fleet. It seems they were confident of the guns/canons, which were placed on board these ships. In addition, there were a handful of soldiers/gunners deployed on board to take care of the security of the ships. We find an account of the dastardly act of the pirates, with respect to the passengers of the ship *Ganj-i-Sawai*, in Khafi Khan's narrative.[141] But what appears to be more shocking in this account is the absolutely callous attitude of the Mughal authorities towards the defense of the ship. Jan Jilliszon, a Dutch navigator who was lent to the Mughal imperial service and was on duty on board the *Ganj-i-Sawai*, in 1694, wrote to his superiors in wonder that the ship was so overcrowded with men and goods that scarcely a gun could be loaded or used (so that it could be successfully operated).[142] In fact, many of the Indian merchant ships carried surprisingly large number of guns, which were perhaps a necessity because of the pirates. But what is really surprising, however, is not the number of their guns, but that they were never in a position to use them.

During the reign of Aurangzeb, it appears that special consideration was given towards the maintenance of an effective flotilla which could take charge of the coastal possessions of the Mughal Empire. It should be remembered that the Magh pirates of the Bay of Bengal were a constant source of trouble for the Mughal shipping and naval establishments.[143] On the other hand, the Mughal possessions of Gujarat and the adjoining coast in the west too, were simultaneously being threatened by Shivaji who had swiftly gained predominance in those regions. Aurangzeb, therefore, was more than content to take the *Siddi* into Mughal services. He accordingly appointed the *Siddi* to the post of the Mughal Admiral.[144] We come across references of many naval vessels being constructed at Surat to bolster the strength of the Mughal navy with bases at Surat and Janjira on the western coast.

Even the French, who registered their arrival in the Indian waters as late as 1664, looked to obtain a stronghold in the Konkan at the earliest. As such, they were permitted to establish their factories at different locations in the Konkan (including Rajapur, where Shivaji allowed them to settle a factory in 1667), but they were not content with mere settlements or factories. In view of the stiff competition in the Indian waters, they too, were looking for bases on the Konkan coast from where their flotilla could be meaningfully operated. The English Records makes us believe that the French Company designed to take the island of Karanja, which was in the close proximity of Bombay, as early as 1671. The French fleet had also taken the soundings of the water near the Karanja Island to study the possibility of establishing a base there. The 'efforts' seems to have continued for a couple of years after which the 'project' was abandoned by them.[145]

As far as Shivaji is concerned, he encouraged and supplemented naval operations[146] by constructing many a forts and bases at carefully chosen sites along the Konkan coastline. Many of his coastal forts commanded the mouth of the creeks and were built on the banks of rivers (not in the open sea), or on a cliff or a spat of land (headland) more than half surrounded by the sea, if possible.[147] At many places he strengthened the defenses of the already existing structures as per the operational requirements. In addition, his initiative to fortify the off-shore islands, and bring them within the operational control of his flotilla, was also strategically justified. We have already had a brief discussion on some of the most important coastal forts/bases in the preceding chapter. When we analyze these structures carefully, we find that most of them had ample defensive features. A large number of the coastal forts had sea facing walls from three sides, and from the land side the protection was provided by digging ditch or having a moat around the periphery. The gates opening on the sea sides also had protective features and were, at times, also regulated by tidal pattern. All of them had sufficient provisions to keep the garrison well fed and defiant to the enemy diktat for a longer time. This was in accordance with the policy enumerated by Amatya who suggests that apart from water and food, the naval forts must have sufficient ammunitions to keep the enemy at bay.[148] In the most prominent of these forts, provisions for a fully functional dockyard also existed. The most notable examples were those of Kulaba, Vijaydurg, Sindhudurg, Jaitapur etc. It should always be kept in mind that apart from lucrative economic prospects (which could be grasped by providing military protection to the ports and coastal mart), ***the freedom of escaping to the sea - particularly at a time when faced with a determined attack originating from the land side - was also one of the added and practical advantages of having such fortified bases.*** The English Company in India resorted to this practice quite often, as they were devoid of any territorial base on the coast.

Operation: The nomenclature and classification of the vessels possessed by the Naval Organization under Shivaji's, in the first instance, provide us with a basis to understand the very purpose of those vessels. In this respect, it is also relevant to bring forth the characterization and classification of navy and its vessels based on its purpose or usage. The Oxford Military History book distinctly identifies three different types of navies (based on its usage). They are:

(1) Green Water Navy

(2) Brown Water Navy

(3) Blue Water Navy.

A 'Blue Water Navy' is designed to operate far from the coastal waters of its home nation. Such navies constitute of ships capable of maintaining station for long periods of time in Deep Ocean, and will have a long logistical tail for their support. The Portuguese, English, Dutch and the French naval units in Indian waters were, in this way, essentially 'Blue Water Navy' which maintained their logistical requirements form the numerous small pockets on the Indian coast. It was to safeguard these 'supply chains' that the Indian coast witnessed the first 'naval action' by the foreigners. In fact, the first naval action in defense of the newly acquired 'logistic bases' in the Indian waters was just ten years after Vasco da Gama's epochal landing in India. In March 1508, a combined Gujarati/Egyptian force surprised a Portuguese squadron at Dabhol, and only two Portuguese ships could manage to escape. In the following February, the Portuguese Viceroy destroyed the allied fleet at Diu, thus confirming Portuguese domination of the Indian Ocean. Pearson's theory of 'Choke Points' is the best way to understand the need of bases for the navies which were operating far away from their home countries.[149] The intensified rivalry between the British and the Dutch fleet in the Indian waters could also be understood in the light of the same hypothesis. Incidentally, however, the naval wars between these two were the first to be conducted entirely at sea. Talking about the navy under Shivaji, it could be concluded that it was in its evolutionary stage. Shivaji, it seems, conceived the Maratha Navy mainly to fight the enemy so as to keep clear the coastal vicinity of his *Swarajya* rather than to pursue an overseas commercial or military ambition through it, in true sense. The Blue Water fleets, as such, required specialized, big and sturdy vessels, which could bear the extremities and risks of prolonged and extended sea-exposures. The navy of Shivaji indeed included some big vessels called *Ghurabs* (as noted earlier), but their tonnage and capacity was not anywhere near to those big European vessels which carried out successful journeys from Europe to India and back. This does not mean, however, that that the Maratha *Ghurabs* were incapable of performing lengthy sea-voyages, but that the emphasis was, at least, not on such activities. It was, rather, to provide security to the coastal surroundings of the *Swarajya* and projection of Maratha sovereignty on the Konkan waters. We must also bear in mind, at the same time, that it was the age of sail, where much of the success of the voyage depended on the behaviour of weather and the navigational expertise. European nations had indeed taken lead in Oceanic voyages and geographical discoveries. They had mapped out the routes of their voyages. Their navigational skills were beyond doubts. Hence, they were in a better position to negotiate with the apparent risks and dangers of sea-voyages. Moreover, they were guided by Missionary Zeal and the lure of huge profits through commercial interaction with the overseas world. On the other hands, the Indians were raw in this field and were also quite ignorant about the new geographical discoveries. On the other hand, since Shivaji had initiated the process of carving out a 'Maratha homeland' in the teeth of opposition of the contemporary rulers, his outlook, at least initially, must not have been to look for overseas possession with the help of his navy. Moreover, as discussed in the preceding pages, the Maratha naval enterprise suffered from the limitation as far as professionalism in seamanship is concerned. Hence, as per terminological characterization, the Maratha navy under Shivaji could not fit into the category of 'Blue Water Navy'.

In contrast to a 'Blue Water Navy', a 'Brown Water Navy' operates essentially in coastal periphery and along inland waterways of a country, where larger ocean-going naval vessels can not readily enter. In this way, Regional Powers may maintain "Brown Water Navy" as a means of localized force projection system. Moreover, **Amatya stresses upon the need to build 'medium sized vessels' which seem to be more pragmatic from the view point of strategy and tactics**. The Maratha navy, as regards functions and operations, could be categorized into a green or brown water navy during the time of Shivaji. The geomorphology of the Konkan was such that big vessels could not have operated without difficulty in the Konkan rivers as they fluctuated greatly in depth depending upon season and tidal effects. Moreover, the coastal water was also shallow, full of submerged rocks and sand bars which hindered the movement of big vessels in the proximity of the coast. Another important aspect was the easy maneuverability of the medium sized/small vessels with (preferably) flat bottoms. The cost effectiveness of such vessels could not be ignored. It also implied that the Marathas would have large number of vessels to register their presence everywhere along the Konkan coast and, at the same time, even if some of these vessels perished in the course of action, it would not have amounted to a loss of such a magnitude which was not easily recoverable. Amatya probably wanted to stress upon administrative rather than economic or other functions of the navy. He, therefore, restricts to the usage of specific kinds of vessels in his narration. This is amplified when he suggests that each naval Suba should consist of five *Ghurabs* and fifteen *Galvats*, and that all subas should form a sar-suba. It means that specific and sturdy vessels (fully equipped with artillery, light-guns, hand-grenades, guns and ammunitions) were required to operate in the coastal vicinity of the Maratha *Swarajya*. This must have suited the aim of the projection of Maratha sovereignty on the sea by navy.

In contrast to the 'Blue Water' and 'Brown Water' navies, the 'Green Water Navy' consists of the flotilla of boats (of various sizes) especially for the purpose of navigation through rivers or various inland water channels. Though most of the military (naval) activities of the pre-modern times were carried with the help of the 'Green Water Navy', it is true that the economic benefits derived from maintaining a 'Green Water Navy' far exceeded its military value. Many of the Indian rulers, whose territories included river ways, had such kind of a flotilla. A study of the navy of the Assam rulers in the medieval times has been done by B.C. Kalita, which provides us with a deep insight of the use of the flotilla of the Ahom Kings.[150] It has also been recorded how the Mughal ruler Aurangzeb made use of his own flotilla to convoy his troops and ammunition to the remote province of Assam and fight against him in the year 1661-62. It is believed that for this venture, 'a force of 12,000 cavalry, 30,000 foot and a flotilla of several hundred armed vessels – which included 10 ghurabs or floating batteries carrying 14 guns, which were towed by four rowing boats...' were assembled. In this process, 'dozen of armed river boats (of the Ahom King) were captured'.[151]

III

NAVAL ENGAGEMENTS: GRAND STRATEGY AND TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS -

The rich heritages of maritime traditions indeed have played a crucial role in the matters of coastal and oceanic navigations in the pre-industrial era. References of the use of navigational charts and of mariners' compass could be found in the texts recording the commercial voyages of the pre-industrial navigators.[152] They had their own methods of charting the sea routes, depicting the land marks, determining the depth or shallowness of the sea water, calculation of time and tide etc. A profound knowledge of these aspects of navigation was particularly necessary for long and tedious voyages in the high seas. The role of technology, howsoever unsophisticated it was, cannot be undermined, at the same time. There has been a debate over sailing capabilities of the boats or ships having one mast plying in the Indian Ocean during medieval period. It has to be understood that it was difficult for such vessels, particularly with a square sail, to advance against the force of the wind. This was precisely the reason why the medieval sailors of the Indian Ocean region chose to sail along with the favourable winds of the monsoon ever since its discovery in the 1st century A.D.

The early explorers, on the contrary, did away with this drawback of the sailing vessels with one mast. They modified their vessels by equipping it with two or three masts and by completely changing the pattern of the sail. Though we lack sufficient data (including archaeological remains) regarding the ships of these early explorers, but some paintings depicting the vessels used in the early voyages provide us with some vital clues. The vessels of the explorers (fitted with up to three masts) were rigged with lateen sails, and, for a better maneuverability, an additional top sail was also there. Needless to say the speed of these vessels was enhanced considerably with these innovations which enabled the early explorers to sail across the globe in a reasonable time. Yet, despite this advantage, Vasco da Gama has to take help of an Indian pilot to land at Calicut. This brings into consideration, yet another significant aspect of navigation i.e., the familiarity and thorough knowledge of the coastal waters and coastal geography. In fact, the understanding of the geographical surroundings of the coast viz. the presence of submerged rocks, reefs, sand-bars, etc. along with the tidal behaviour of the sea can have significant implications on the economic and political fortunes of a coastal state.

Every state formulates a military doctrine of its own which is in harmony with its political policies, and geographical realities. The geographical location of a state affects its accessibility, vulnerability, manoeuvrability, strategic quality, political sensibility and national policy. In terms of terrestrial location, the Maratha *Swarajya* could be categorised as '**Maritime location**', i.e., a territory having access to sea and also connected with land. A large stretch of the *Swarajya*, in fact, was coastal terrain, as it was the actual zone of contact between the land and sea. The coastal terrain, so far the strategic considerations go, offers at least two distinct military advantages to the state:

(1) Offers opportunity for the deployment of naval forces for defensive purposes.

(2) Offers opportunity of employing maritime commerce to sustain its defence effort.

A cautious appreciation of the hydrographical character of the coastline (viz. the presence of gulfs, bays, river estuaries, large lagoons etc. with sufficient entrance) and the character of the Ocean/Sea bed (viz. the nature of the favourable tides and streams, presence of sand-bars or submerged reefs stones etc.) further helps in extracting the military advantages offered by the coastal terrain. In case of the Maratha *Swarajya*, a survey of Shivaji's political career reveals that he had also set 'Military Tasks' in pursuance of the state policy for the attainment of the following objectives:

(a) Military Objectives - To destroy enemy and its war machine.

(b) Political Objectives - To enforce political or associated demands on the adversary, and

(c) Geographical Objectives - To overthrow the enemy from strategically important areas.

The very task of the Maratha Navy was, thus, also specifically defined towards the realization of the *Swarajya's* defined 'Military Doctrine'. It has been brought out earlier that the Maratha navy, right from its inception, was considered as an independent limb of the state apparatus, hence it was expected that the Navy would set up its own 'Tasks' in consonance with the grand Military Objective of the state. To achieve such 'Tasks' it would have its own strategy and tactics depending on the availability of resources, technological know-how, the nature of the enemy, and, above all, the short-term and long-term goals. In the subsequent pages we will examine the strategic and tactical considerations[153] of the Maratha navy which were put to use in the course of actual naval engagements during Shivaji's reign.

A better understanding of military strategy and tactics is possible only in the background of the task which is to be accomplished through military undertakings. Strategy may be defensive or offensive, or, at times - a combination of both, depending on the circumstances under which the troops operate. Hence, to have a better comprehension of the Maratha Naval strategy and tactics, let us start with the defined aim or objective of the Maratha naval establishment. Sabhasad puts forward the view that the Maratha navy was created to fight and defeat the *Siddi* of Janjira. The Portuguese sources also support this hypothesis. Hence, particularly with regard to the *Siddi* of Janjira, the 'Grand Strategy' of the Maratha navy out-rightly appears to be 'Offensive'. This is also evident from the long drawn conflict between Shivaji and the *Siddi* chiefs both on land and water. Here, the 'Military Objective' – of the destruction of the enemy and its war machine, was being served with the Navy as one of the 'means'. In fact, the prolonged naval war between these two parties could also be perceived as a 'war of attrition'. The question now is, was the Maratha naval policy under Shivaji the same with respect to the Portuguese, the English or, for that matter, any other European power? A study of the naval encounters between Shivaji's fleet and the Europeans gives us the impression that Shivaji was not completely hostile to these nations and that his military actions were mixed with caution. It may not be grossly incorrect to infer that Shivaji, by means of his naval policy with respect to the Europeans, was trying to achieve 'Political Objectives' i.e., to enforce political or associated demands on the adversary' in the interest of the *Swarajya.* As regards his endeavours to oust the *Siddi* from Janjira, or his occupation and fortification of the desolate off-shore rocks like Suvarnadurg, or even the forcible occupation and fortification of the un-inhibited island of Khanderi, they could well be understood in the light of his desire to fulfil the 'Geographical Objectives' i.e., to overthrow the enemy from strategically important areas and to prevent them from occupying one'.

From the documentary evidences cited above, we can well formulate an idea of the naval strategy pursued by Shivaji. In the first instance, the Martha naval fleet might have been used to mete out surprise on the enemy. The reason is obvious; the Maratha navy, more so, during its formative years, might not have been in a position to congregate the requisite number of specialized vessels so as to force a direct naval fight on a strong opponent. The Marathas under Shivaji, as such, followed the principle of surprise in almost all their encounters with the opponents. By resorting to the element of surprise the Marathas not only made the best use of the geographical features, but this principle also allowed them to put to the best use their resources and, at the same time, served their immediate objective of putting more pressure on their enemy. In the second instance, as reported, the Maratha fleet was to waylay the ships coming from Persia and Mocha. This assumption is also reasonable as the Maratha crew consisted mostly of the local coastal people who had inherited the profession of seafaring since generations. Among the Hindu castes, there were Bhandari, Son-Koli, Bhoi and Gabits; whereas from among the Muslims there were Daldis, the Kharvis, the Bhadelas and Vaghers. All these castes supplied crew for the navy.[154] They were thoroughly acquainted with the minute details of the coastal sea-bed in their vicinity; hence they could have easily waylaid the vessels which were unfamiliar with that part of the coast and the timings of the tide. In this way the Marathas could have made a good escape with the 'prize catch'. Even Sabhasad seems to refer to such a naval tactics while describing the success of the Maratha vessels against the ships of 27 nations. The third proposition is to transport an army, via sea or river, to a certain destination and then conduct a military expedition on land. This too, appears reasonable. By resorting to such exercise the army would have saved its energy (which would have been otherwise exhausted in forced marches towards the destination) and be fresh for the campaign. It would also have helped in saving a considerable amount of time which could be utilised elsewhere. Moreover, such an action also carried with it the advantage of surprising the enemy as the blow could be delivered from unexpected quarters for which the enemy was largely unprepared. For Shivaji, whose nascent *Swarajya* was bordered by enemies from all sides, it made sense if he put into use his naval fleet to supplement and support any expedition on land if geographical situation permitted so. Late in 1664, when Shivaji undertook the mission to Kanara, he apparently planned to march his army down the west coast, get on board his fleet waiting at Bhatkal (the southern point of North Kanara district), and raid the coastal towns. But Khawas Khan, a Bijapuri general, who was sent by the Adilshah to deal with the Marathas, barred his path[155]. The Basrur naval expedition of 1665 is another example of co-ordination between the navy and army to achieve a single objective. The Basrur expedition commenced with a contingent of about 85 frigates and 03 large ships from Malvan in the South Konkan with Shivaji aboard. By that time, the Portuguese had reconciled to the enlarged status of Shivaji in the affairs of Deccan. Hence the Portuguese, purposefully, did not interfere in the movement of the Maratha naval fleet so long as their own interests were not threatened. As a result, the Maratha convoy sailed past the Portuguese headquarters of Goa and proceeded further south to Basrur, an important port of Kanara under a small kingdom of Bednur. The Maratha fleet took the King of Bednur by surprise and the port of Basrur was at the mercy of the Maratha marine troops. The Marathas could lay hands on a considerably rich booty which was further utilised in augmenting their naval establishment. But the fleet or army was not always that privileged to cut across the occupied areas of the Europeans and reach their destination. In the next segment we shall scrutinize how the Portuguese, on more than a couple of occasions, foiled the Maratha attempt to cross through their territory or territorial waters to deal with their (i.e., the Maratha) enemies.

Let us now try to understand how the Maratha naval combats served to fulfil the desired politico-military-strategic objectives set by Shivaji.

IV

SHIVAJI AND THE *SIDDI*: QUEST FOR *JANJIRA* AND THE OCCUPATION OF *KHANDERI* - It had been Shivaji's ultimate intent to wrest the island fortress of Janjira from the *Siddi* Admirals and bring it under his own control. Throughout his life he pursued this aim - at times - quite vigorously, but failed to achieve it. However, realising the importance and significance of such naval bases during the course of his struggle with the *Siddi*, Shivaji settled for Khanderi, which would have provided analogous realistic advantages to the Maratha naval establishment. Though Khanderi was occupied and converted into a naval base at the fag end of his career, yet it provided significant strategic advantage to the Marathas over their naval competitors in the years to come. The crucial 'Geographical Objectives' of the Maratha military policy, i.e., 'to overthrow the enemy from strategically important areas and to prevent them from occupying one', undoubtedly, was the underlining factor for this action. It was during his endeavour to achieve this objective that he put to use his navy in a tactical and strategic manner. Shivaji's endeavour for Janjira and Khanderi, thus, provide us with the vital fundamentals and give us a deeper insight of the naval strategy and tactics put into effective use by him.

A brief survey of the history of the *Siddi* suggests that they held the southern portion of the province of Kalyan as *Jagir* from the Nizamshahi government of Ahmednagar. The above mentioned *Jagir* was bestowed in acknowledgement of the services of the naval contingent maintained by them for the defence of commerce on the Western Coast, and the conveyance of Mecca pilgrims - to and from the Red Sea. Interestingly the post of Admiral was not hereditary and, as a rule, the most competent naval officer of the Abyssinian unit in the service of the Nizamshahi State was elevated to the position of Admiral. The *Jagir* comprising of the localities of Danda-Rajapuri and adjoining areas was conferred to him for the maintenance of the naval apparatus. In this way there was a small, but noticeably powerful presence of the Abyssinians along the Southern part of the province of Kalyan since long. The control centre of the *Siddi* naval contingent was Danda-Rajapuri (Rajapuri being a strong coastal fort along the Murud creek). There was a little island off the Rajapuri harbour, known as Janjira, which was strongly fortified and well garrisoned with fighting men as well as fighting ships. With the disappearance of the Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar in 1636, the province of Kalyan was divided between the Mughals and Adilshah of Bijapur. As per the territorial arrangement, northern part of Kalyan (up-to Nagothana) went to the Mughals, whereas the Abyssinian settlement became the new acquisition of the Bijapur rulers. As such, Bijapur government had, for a long time, ruled over parts of the Konkan including the famous ports of Dabhol, Anjanwel, Ratnagiri etc, hence the recent acquisition on the coast was to further augment its sphere of influence in the Konkan waters. The Adilshah proved to be prudent enough by not disturbing the arrangements followed by his predecessors - the Nizamshah of Ahmednagar, with respect to the *Siddi*. He was fully mindful of the fact that the mobilization of the *Siddi* to his cause would serve the maritime interests of the Bijapur state in a much healthier way. Hence, the *Siddi* Admiral's position along with his *Jagir* was re-confirmed by the Bijapur government. The additional title of *Wazir* was also conferred upon the *Siddi* Admiral who was assigned the control over the entire coastal possession of the Bijapur state. In this way, the *Siddi* continued to perform essential naval services to the new masters and remained unchallenged in the Konkan waters. The above-mentioned arrangement further strengthens the point that if any land-based power wanted to exercise effective control over the Konkan coast, it would have been mandatory for him to either make the Siddi a partner to that scheme (as the Bijapur Sultan did with him) or render him powerless (for the realization of which Shivaji had concentrated all his efforts).

From the contemporary accounts, though, it is perceptible that the Naval Establishment of the Marathas had been raised (by Shivaji) with the prime objective of challenging and defeating the Naval squadron of the *Siddi* of Janjira, no detailed account of such operations have come down to us through the contemporary documents. Many a times - the number of vessels involved, the strength of the troops put to fight, the duration of maritime actions and the final outcome of such engagements are recorded, but there is no reference of the battle-plan or how the naval battle was fought. In the absence of such information, it is difficult to comment precisely on the vital aspects of Naval Strategy and Tactics put to use during these naval engagements. At best, we can extract some indispensable clues on the strategy and tactical considerations of both the parties.

Ever since the capture of Kalyan-Bhiwandi by the Maratha forces, Shivaji was keen on extending his sway over the entire coastal stretch of the Konkan down south.

This brought him in dangerous proximity of the *Siddi* of Janjira his immediate neighbour. A struggle for the mastery over the coast ensued between the two. Initially, this struggle was on the land with Shivaji vigorously propagating the claim of the 'Maratha *Swarajya*'. As a result, the *Siddi,* in the upper-Konkan, were being pushed to the brink. This struggle was violent and inhuman as each side tried to make sudden attacks and depredations and frequently indulged in loot, arson, murder and enslavement of the captured people. It seems Shivaji got an upper hand in this contest and occupied a sizeable portion of the *Siddi*'s *Jagir* in the Konkan. The *Siddi Jagir* was virtually surrounded from the landward side by the Maratha troops, but a large portion of the Konkan coast was still controlled by the *Siddi* because of an efficient navy. Shivaji, therefore, immediately undertook the construction of vessels meant for naval fights, so that military pressure could be exerted on the *Siddi* from the sea-side too. This strategy would have proved advantageous as the Marathas were quite strong on the land as compared to the *Siddi* who had a smaller territory and a comparatively limited military contingent.

Early in the year 1659, Shivaji was hard-pressed by the arrival of the Bijapuri General Afzal Khan in the vicinity of the Maratha *Swarajya*. But, the Maratha military campaign against the *Siddi* continued oblivious of this great danger. While Shivaji himself proceeded to tackle Afzal Khan, another Maratha contingent was despatched to subdue the *Siddi*. *Sabhasad Bakhar* records the success of the Maratha army against the *Siddi* even though Kay Sawant, another strong commander of the Bijapuri force was assisting him.[156] After getting rid of Afzal Khan, Shivaji devoted his undivided attention towards the reduction of the *Siddi*. Once again, as *Sabhasad Bakhar* records, the *Siddi* was humiliated in hard fought battle on land'. Janjira was tactically blockaded by the Maratha vessels. As a result the *Siddi* was hard-pressed for subsistence and provisions. From there started the story of the clandestine assistance provided to the *Siddi* by the Portuguese as well as the British. We have numerous evidences of these European powers siding with the *Siddi* in the event of a contest between him and Shivaji. The European action could be explained in terms of their desire not to have a stronger neighbour (in the form of the Marathas) in the vicinity of their own territorial possessions on the Konkan coast. Under such circumstances, Shivaji, could not have done much except for the punitive action on the Europeans either by closing the overland trade routes passing through his domains or confinement a few of their trading vessels and put some demands on them in the bargain. Coming back to the Siddi story - since his stronghold Janjira was blockaded and was also facing pressure from the Maratha fleet, the *Siddi* decided come to terms with Shivaji. For the political survival of the *Siddi*, the sea-castle of Janjira mattered a lot. Hence, the *Siddi* proved to be clever enough to save Janjira for himself and relinquished (though reluctantly) his hold over the castle of Danda-Rajapuri in return for peace.[157] Whereas, for the *Siddi*, the day was saved by negotiating peace with Shivaji; for Shivaji, the territorial gains were substantial as it implied further extension of Maratha control over the Konkan coast. The Maratha quickly organised their recent territorial gain on the coast by permanently placing a strong garrison and erecting strong fortifications at the approach routes to Danda-Rajapuri.[158] ***In this way, the precondition of the physical control of the coast for a practicable operation of naval vessels was fulfilled through the acquisition of Danda-Rajapuri.*** Danda-Rajapuri indeed was a great gain considering its economic and strategic location. A study of the contemporary British Factory Records further reveals that the British administrators, at the same time, were eyeing to gain control over Danda-Rajapuri. Some of the correspondences even point towards the British plans to favour Danda-Rajapuri in place of Surat as the headquarters of the British settlements in India.

At the same time, the construction of Maratha naval vessels was earnestly pursued at Kalyan-Bhiwandi. The Portuguese, though, were certainly not comfortable with the urgency of the purpose and tenacity of Maratha naval vessels. An appraisal of the pace at which the constructions of naval vessels were undertaken by Shivaji, and the fact that skilled artisans with an expertise in boat building were pressed into the enterprise, was enough to cause an alarm to the Portuguese administrators. They could well comprehend that the Maratha warships were likely to pose analogous threat to the Portuguese as to the *Siddi* in the days to come. In fact, the earliest Portuguese reference (of the year 1659) on Maratha navy manifestly emphasizes their anxiety. It reads, "...He (Shivaji) has built some men-of-war in Bhiwandi, Kalyan and Panvel, ports in Bassein taluka. To ensure that these men-of-war do not set sail, we have ordered the Portuguese Captain not to let them come out of these ports."[159] From another Portuguese document of the year 1662 (By this time Shivaji had overrun the Konkan coast down south and had captured many a important ports like Dabhol form Bijapur), their unease is more clearly perceptible. It was none other than the Portuguese Governor of Goa, who reportedly suggested (to his officers at Chaul) that they should find some courageous men who would secretly set on fire some of the Maratha vessels. This 'instruction' was communicated in the light of a request made by the Maratha Subedar of Dabhol, Ragho Ballal, to allow five Maratha warships and one *Pataxo* interned in the Karanja creek to go out in the sea. It should be recalled that the Maratha vessels form Kalyan, Bhiwandi and Panvel, before they could sail into the open sea, had to pass through the channels which were commanded by the Portuguese. Hence the Portuguese permission was required for the same. Some of the Factory Records of the British EIC also observe, with some concern, the maritime arrangements of the Marathas during the formative years of the Maratha navy. Early in 1663, the Surat factors of the British EIC report that Shivaji was "fitting out two ships of considerable burden for trading with Mocha..."[160] In yet another correspondence, the Surat factors on 26th June, 1664, record with concern that, "...Shiva(ji) was fitting out a fleet of 60 frigates for an attack on some unknown quarter, probably 'to surprise all junks and vessels belonging to that port (Surat) and to waylay them on their return from Basra and Persia,' or to transport an army up to Cambay creek (Sabarmati) for making a raid on Ahmedabad."[161] At the end of November, however, it was learnt that the fleet had been sent to Bhatkal to co-operate with his army in his invasion of Kanara.[162] A Portuguese letter, written by the Captain of Chaul in August 1664, corroborates the information contained in the English document cited above. This letter reports that Shivaji was building 50 ships in Upper Chaul and that 07 of them were ready to set out in the sea. It also emerges that the Portuguese, by that time, were not interested in blocking the passage of the Maratha ships in view of the growing military and political stature of Shivaji). It is interesting to note that the British and Portuguese documents report to the presence of a large number of ships under the control of Shivaji. It appears realistic too, in the backdrop of Shivaji's constant pre-occupation with the *Siddi*, and also because of the impending Basrur expedition undertaken by sea-route. It has to be kept in mind that by the year 1664, Shivaji had gained many a brilliant and strategic military victories, including the one on the Mughal Viceroy of Deccan - Shaista Khan. As a result his sphere of influence in the Konkan and elsewhere had considerably expanded. He had acquired the status of a territorial power to be reckoned with. The daring raid of Surat in Jan 1664 could be seen as a purposeful show of his military prowess. Needless to say, all these military activities were pouring rich dividends for the Maratha *Swarajya*.

It is also said that Shivaji invested the money obtained form the Surat raid of 1664 in the construction of the marine fort of Sindhudurg. This invincible sea fort was designed to monitor the waters of South Konkan. Shivaji, moreover, was quick to learn from the initial reverses he suffered in the process of capturing the island fort of Janjira from the *Siddi*. He understood the importance of a strong naval fortress, because the *Siddi* were able to survive, after being deprived from any landed possession on the coast, only because of the unconquerable fortress of Janjira. The construction of Sindhudurg, in other words, would have rivalled the role played by Janjira.

In the meanwhile, the *Siddi* naval depredations on Maratha coast were growing violent day-by-day. It was, after all, the matter of survival for him. He was deprived of all his landed possessions on the coast, including his naval command office of Danda-Rajapuri, which was now with the Marathas. The only alternative for him to avoid certain starvation was to use his naval fleet for coastal raids in the Maratha territory. The *Siddi*, thus, had resorted to stealing rice, laying waste the Maratha coastal territory by putting it to fire and capturing and enslaving of Maratha people so that they could be sold. In addition, any vessel plying in the coastal waters of Konkan was prone to *Siddi* attack and destruction. It was only because of his uncontested hold over the island fortress of Janjira that he could indulge in such audacious activities on the coastal water as well as along the coast. Such audacious acts of the *Siddi* men led to the outbreak of war again between the *Siddi* and Marathas. Shivaji had continuously maintained military pressure on the *Siddi* and did not allow them to recover Danda-Rajapuri. Moreover, the *Siddi* sea-castle was also subjected to heavy cannonade year after year by Shivaji. Shivaji was unrelenting and did not allow the *Siddi* to concentrate on any one front. Fortunately for the *Siddi*, the arrival of the Mughal Commander Maharaja Jai Singh with a special force - to bring under control Shivaji's activities in the Deccan, provided some relief (though short-lived) form the Maratha pressure. Jai Singh tried to corner Shivaji by asking the Portuguese not to allow Shivaji any refuge in their territory. A contemporary Persian work *Haft Anjuman* tells us further that Jai Singh had also asked the *Siddi* chief to cooperate with the Mughal plan by launching counter-offensive on the Marathas in the Konkan. The *Siddi* chief was also offered *Mansab* in the Mughal service.[163] Under those circumstances, Shivaji had no option but to make peace (the Treaty of Purandhar) with the Mughal Commander by handing over at least 23 of his forts to the Mughals. It has also been suggested in the *Haft Anjuman* that Shivaji had demanded the possession of Janjira in lieu of the agreement and had even 'offered to attempt the conquest of Janjira for the Mughal Emperor'; however, Jai Singh refrained from committing any thing positively on this issue, and *Siddi* dominance on Janjira continued.

After escaping from the clutches of the imperial Mughals, Shivaji had returned back to his *Swarajya* definitely by the last quarter of 1666. He was careful enough not to infuriate the Mughals again by undertaking any military expeditions directed against their interests in the Deccan. At the same time, as the contemporary documents suggest, he made peace with the Mughals by formally accepting a *Mansab* from them. Being thus free from that quarter, Shivaji once again concentrated on the reduction of the *Siddi*. In the year 1667, after the monsoon had subsided, Shivaji again applied military pressure on the *Siddi* and personally directed the action. The *Siddi* was hard pressed, and with no hope of succour from the Bijapur government this time, he turned towards the Portuguese and made a frantic request to bail him out of the difficult situation. As such, the Portuguese had helped him earlier too, against the Marathas, on a couple of occasions by secretly sending him food and other necessities. On the basis of references in some Portuguese documents, it seems that that in lieu of Portuguese help, the *Siddi* had transferred his allegiance to the Portuguese in the year 1668. (Though this settlement/arrangement did not last long.) The very first clause of the treaty signed by *Siddi*, towards this effect, reveals that *Siddi* Fateh Khan (the then Admiral) had destroyed some Portuguese embarkations and seditiously wished to attack the lands and ports of the Portuguese. It also stipulated that in future, *Siddi*'s ships would not navigate without obtaining Portuguese *Cartazes*, nor his ships were to carry any defensive material (may be war materials). The *Siddi* was to pay the duties as was being done by the Mughal ships. It provided that the *Siddi* protection and fetched him a permit to carry 500-600 *Khandis* of provisions to the friendly ports every year.[164]

The prospect of the *Siddi* joining the Portuguese camp against Shivaji was expected to tilt the balance of (naval) power in favour of the former. Shivaji, however, was undeterred by the new power-equations and he, in a dutiful manner, continued to apply military pressure on the *Siddi* year after year. His grand strategy was somehow to push the *Siddi* garrison of Janjira on the brink of starvation, thus leaving the *Siddi* with no other substitute but to surrender Janjira (to the Marathas). To achieve this objective, Shivaji deployed the Maratha naval ships around Janjira in the best possible way. The island fort of Janjira was thus, virtually surrounded and blockaded every year. Shivaji could anticipate some success in breaking the resistance of the *Siddi*, but the military assistance of the Portuguese at the eleventh hour prevented the *Siddi* from crumbling down to the Maratha pressure. It seems that the *Siddi* was so hard-pressed (as no military assistance was coming from the Portuguese) that he opened channels of negotiations with the English as well as the Mughals. The British administrators of the nearby territory curiously kept a track of the Maratha-*Siddi* conflict as the outcome of this conflict was surely going to affect their trading fortunes on the Konkan coast. The English factors at Bombay acknowledge the receipt of a message from Fateh Khan, the *Siddi* of Danda-Rajapuri, 'whose island fortress of Janjira was being closely besieged by Shivaji'.[165] The same letter contains an explicit hint of the Maratha naval strategy against Janjira. The letter reads, "... Though he (Shivaji) cannot storm the place (Janjira), only thinks to starve him (*Siddi*) out..." It also appears, on the basis of the above mentioned letter, that Aurangzeb (on receipt of a request for help from the *Siddi*) had also asked Shivaji to withdraw his force from the surroundings of Janjira.[166] This letter further reveals the very mindset of the besieged *Siddi* admiral of Janjira. The letter records, "...so the *Siddi* resolves to hold it (Janjira fort) to the last, and then has thoughts of delivering it up to the Mughals, who have an army about Kalyan, commanded by Lodhi Khan."[167] It seems that the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb was also prepared to pay a sum of rupees three lakh to the British to bring Danda-Rajapuri (Janjira) under the Mughal control.[168] The Bombay authorities, on the other hand, tried to create an opportunity for themselves out of this situation. One of their letter reads, "...the Portuguese Captain of Chaul has dealt falsely with him, in seizing one of his vessels after he has assured him contrary; so he (*Siddi*) will not trust them, and rather desires our friendship... This place is doubtless of great concern, almost invincible if not blocked up by sea... The Company formerly have had an eye towards it, and now may be the very nick of time to compass it... If two or three ships were sent down from Surat and we empowered to appear with them (*Siddi* fleet) at Danda Rajapuri, and advantageous treaty might be made with the *Siddi*..."[169]

The Policy of Naval Blockade seems to have worked fine for the moment for Shivaji, as the *Siddi* was apparently desperate to enlist himself in the services of any one who would have relieved him from the ceaseless Maratha pressure. This also brings into light the crucial fact that mere possession of an isolated island base was not enough to sustain the naval operations and related expenditures. A base could serve its purpose only if its requirements and supplies can be continually guaranteed. The *Siddi* was deprived of any landed possession on the coast which could have supplemented the food requirements at least. The island of Janjira, at the same time, was too small to have produced any food grains or met any other requirement related to the military/naval apparatus. It was, thus, necessary to have a territorial status for the *Siddi* to enable him to operate efficiently in the coastal waters. At the same time, so long as Janjira was with the *Siddi*, he was difficult to get to, and could not be brought to task. Under such circumstances, to cut-off any kind of contact or supply to the island of Janjira was the only way out to coerce the *Siddi* into submission. For that, it required a strong naval fleet which could have defied the *Siddi* fleet. Shivaji, thus, continued with his Policy of Naval Blockade against the *Siddi*. The next year (i.e. 1670) the *Siddi* resistance seems to have finally shown the sign of cracking. Being exhausted by the constant struggle (now seeming hopeless too), the *Siddi* Admiral Fath Khan allegedly had made up his mind to come to terms with Shivaji. This decision came in the wake of acute scarcity of food and other provisions in Janjira. Moreover, the Portuguese, their newly crowned masters, failed to come to their timely rescue this time, because of bigger compulsions. The contemporary Mughal chronicler Khafi Khan throws more light on this event. As per Khafi Khan's narrative, Fath Khan, the Admiral (chief) of Janjira, was almost going to hand-over Janjira to Shivaji and settle down with a rich *Jagir* as compensation, but somehow, three of his lieutenants got an inking about this plan. They immediately swung into action in order to prevent Janjira from going into the hands of an 'infidel'. In a bloodless coup, *Siddi* the Admiral was put behind the bars. *Siddi* Khairiyat, one of the three subordinates as well as the second in command of the *Siddi* fleet, was proclaimed the Chief. The Mughal help and intervention was immediately invoked. The Mughals also proved to be too eager to step in and oblige - after-all, it would have enabled them to put a close eye on the 'anti-imperial activities' of Shivaji.[170]

No sooner did the *Siddi* Admiral transfer his loyalty to the Mughals, than his fortunes showed signs of considerable improvement. Early in 1671, the *Siddi* carried out a deceitful, though daring, attack on Danda-Rajapuri and wrested it form the Marathas. The recovery of Danda-Rajapuri was fundamental for their subsistence as well as effective naval operations. It is interesting to note that the *Siddi* fleet played an instrumental role in this success. It was an **Amphibious Operation** mixed with surprise. The *Siddi* vessels (around 40 of them) transported the troops aboard and landed most of them on the coast from where they went ahead to scale the walls of the fort from different sides and took it under control. It is said that within no time a large area around Danda-Rajapuri was occupied by the *Siddi* and the defences of Danda-Rajapuri were enhanced in such a manner that all the approach routes to Danda-Rajapuri were brought under the range of *Siddi* guns and canons. At the same time, the coastal defences were so strengthened that no vessel would ordinarily dare approach anywhere near the fort without risking itself to the bombardment of canons. Moreover, it would have required ships with long range artillery and mortars to make its impact felt upon the coastal fortress. The whole episode highlights the importance of a competent naval fleet and equally effective artillery for the protection or attack on the coastal areas. After getting counted as an indivisible part of the Mughal military apparatus, the *Siddi* enjoyed great favours and assistance from the Mughal Subedar of Surat. His area of effective and 'legal' naval operations increased considerably. Surat became the headquarters of the Mughal Imperial Navy looked after by the *Siddi* admiral who was now bequeathed upon with the additional title of Yakut Khan. The position of Janjira was not undermined as it continued to remain the safe abode of the *Siddi* political activities - largely independent of the imperial diktats. The *Siddi*, on the other hand, because of his inflated status as the Mughal Naval Commander, was also in a position to force his demands on the British factors at Bombay. He needed to winter his ships during monsoon season as Janjira and Danda-Rajapuri did not have enough space to provide shelter to his ships. Though, Surat was an option, but, it was having the imperial ships including the cargo vessels. Moreover, Surat was a bit too far from the *Siddi* base of Janjira and Danda-Rajapuri where the threat of Shivaji's vessels was always alive. To counter the threat from the Maratha armada, it was reasonable to keep the *Siddi* vessels in the vicinity like Bombay. The Bombay port also offered complete safety from the Maratha vessels or any kind of sabotage by the Marathas (viz. putting the *Siddi* vessels on fire thereby causing a heavy loss).

The loss of Danda-Rajapuri was a big setback for Shivaji who aimed at complete domination of the Konkan coast by extending the limits of his *Swarajya* to the seashore. Moreover, his failure to take Janjira from the *Siddi* further disallowed the (intended) unchallenged domination of the Maratha navy in the coastal waters of Konkan. The *Siddi* had become more powerful, at least in the coastal waters, because of his alliance with the Mughals. Shivaji was, thus left with no choice, but to regain Danda-Rajapuri from the *Siddi*. A fierce struggle started once again with both the armies making inroads into each others' territories. As a result trade and commerce was greatly affected, as evident from the contemporary European records. Shivaji, however, was frustrated in his attempts to take either Danda-Rajapuri or Janjira. It is said that once Shivaji even offered a high *Mansab* and other significant rewards to the Siddi chief in exchange for the control of Janjira fort[171] but to no avail. The control over this un-subdued island fortress helped the Siddi to successfully contest the sovereignty of the Marathas on the Konkan waters for years to come. It was because of his repeated failure to grab Janjira that Shivaji decided to occupy and fortify the desolate island of Khanderi having an area not more than even two square miles. The location of Khanderi was indeed strategic from the point of view of navy. In fact, the Portuguese, in the past, had also worked on the idea of using Khanderi for their own purpose but that idea was shelved by them as they could find no source of fresh water on that island.[172] Moreover, this island was uninhibited and was being used only as a source of fuel (wood). What made Shivaji vie for its possession and subsequent fortification was sheer vision and imagination. He knew that by possessing it, he could keep an eye over the movement of ships (Including those of the Siddis as they wintered at Mazagaon every monsoon) to and from the British port of Bombay. The British could also visualize the danger posed to the navigation of Bombay because of an enemy post at Khanderi, hence they immediately protested against the action of Shivaji. The Siddi was equally alarmed and even tried to resist Shivaji in fortifying Khanderi by joining hands with the English.[173] But the alliance failed to achieve any success against the befitting reply and equally firm determination of Shivaji. The fright of Siddi could be presumed from the fact that he captured another small island (that too inhibited only by rats!) in the vicinity called Underi.[174] It was the turn of Shivaji now to voice protest. He asked the British to direct (their ally) Siddi to vacate Underi,[175] but nothing came out of this effort and the status-quo was maintained. Shivaji, in any case, did not live long after the Khanderi-Underi episode to have altered the situation significantly in favour of the Marathas. But, so long as this great visionary lived, he tried to exercise his full authority and sovereignty over the Konkan Sea with the help of his naval establishment.

V

THE EUROPEAN FACTOR:

Shivaji's higher ambition, no doubt, included within its scope - the complete subjugation of the Konkan coast. But he knew that the realization of this plan depended essentially on the raising of a capable naval contingent. As he successfully over-ran the Konkan coast in the early phase of his military/political career, he noticed the scattered commercial/military/naval pockets of the various European maritime powers on the western coast. They virtually dominated the coastal shipping by virtue of their superior guns and navigational technology. The Portuguese had long dominated the west coast by forcing the indigenous vessels to buy their protection through the purchase of 'passes'. The passionate conflict between the British and the Dutch[176] was almost in the process of settling down with the Dutch deciding to settle further East. The French were the new entrants to the scene. All of these European powers were trying to extract maximum advantages out of the situation. They made all sorts of legal/illegal alliances with the hapless native rulers along the coast - most of whom lacked any decent naval presences in their respective coastal surroundings.

Going by the very purpose of their business in this part of the world, the European powers were far away from making any conscious efforts to work for a sovereign status for themselves initially. However, their attempts to undermine the sovereign authority of the native rulers could not be totally ruled out in the pursuit of their commercial interests (for example, the attempt to monopolise trade in certain commodities; by indulging into hostile acts like seizure of native crafts, making them pay ransom, etc.). Such acts of high-handedness (i.e. European infraction upon the absolute political authority of a sovereign) would have been the last thing that Shivaji would have tolerated. He was, therefore, quite alert regarding their activities. At the same time, he was mature enough to overlook the significance of the European presence on the west coast. He could well comprehend that, in the Oceanic matters, only the European powers were capable of contributing positively to naval resources of the *Swarajya*. Their navies were powerful and their ships were large and strong, well equipped with muskets, artillery and other ammunition. Even their neutrality could have favoured a speedy attainment of his prime naval objective, viz. the overthrow of the *Siddi* of Janjira. On the other hand he was also mindful of the advantages of the commerce brought by the Europeans for his countrymen. It was thus, the farsightedness of Shivaji that he did not show needless penchant towards any such policy which would alienate the European merchant-adventurers. As noted earlier, the state-policy as enumerated by Amatya, viz. 'the foreign merchants should be allowed to settle…' also recommended a similar approach. Moreover, with strategic considerations in mind, Shivaji chose not to be discourteous to the European merchant-adventurers as far as possible. We have already noted elsewhere that he had requested the Portuguese on a couple of occasions to allow his naval vessels to pass through the Thana creek as those vessels were 'meant to be used against the *Siddi* of Danda-Rajapuri'. He also used to buy the Portuguese passes for his vessels initially and used to pay custom duties to them too. When he raided south Konkan in the 1660, the British Factory of Rajapur was also plundered by the Maratha troops, but he showed eagerness in encouraging them to British reopen their factory by promising to compensate them for the losses they had suffered. As regards the Dutch, he was successful in persuading them to support his cause in return for Maratha help for the Dutch military ventures. Regarding the 'newcomer' French - they were immediately allowed to open a Factory at Rajapur and certain concessions were also granted to them. In return, the Marathas could secure some guns and ammunitions from them and gained in strength and confidence. Let us now discuss the strategic relationship of Shivaji with the European powers.

a) **Interaction with the Portuguese:** The Portuguese were well entrenched on the west coast when Shivaji was leading the Maratha people towards the realisation of their *Swarajya*. They commanded an extensive coastline on the north Konkan coast, the limits of which coincided with that of the Ahmednagar, and, later on, the Bijapur state. It is believed that in the year 1636, the Adil Shah of Bijapur commanded a shoreline of 300 kilometres.[177] This shoreline remained with him until Shivaji began to make inroads into it in the 1660's. By 1675, the Portuguese and the Adil Shah ceased to have common borders as Shivaji had taken over the entire coastline belonging to the Adil Shah by then. In this way, the Portuguese came to share their eastern boundary in the Konkan with the ever-changing and expanding western frontiers of the nascent Maratha *Swarajya*. It is true that the Portuguese power in India was on the path of virtual decline in the second half of the 17th century. The Dutch and the English were aggressively expanding their respective spheres of influence in India at the cost of the Portuguese. But, the Portuguese still were too good to keep hold of their '*Estado*' and pursue its interests in the face of local pressures and threats. The Portuguese navy was practically too good for any of their Indian counterparts including the Marathas. Moreover, the Portuguese were also aware of weakness on land. They, therefore, were shrewd enough to sound politically more accurate and diplomatically polished while interacting with the native powers. We have already noted how shrewd the Portuguese were while dealings with Shivaji, who had become strong enough to cause serious hindrances to their commercial activities. Though, they professed friendship with the Marathas in general, they had also simultaneously tried deceitful methods with the purport of causing impairment to Shivaji's naval endeavour. The exasperation of the Portuguese, particularly from the Maratha vessels, becomes quite manifest by the year 1667, as the Portuguese Vice-Rei Conde de San Vincente wrote to the King of Portugal, "I am afraid of Shivaji's naval ships. We did not take sufficient preventive steps and so he has built many a forts on the Konkan Coast. Today he has several ships and they are large ones…"[178] It is interesting to note, however, that despite the threat potential from the Maratha navy, the Portuguese, at times, preferred to help Shivaji (though in a covert manner) in his struggle against the

Mughals. The dual policy of the Portuguese in dealing with the contenders of the Deccan is evident from the contemporary Portuguese letters and correspondences. In a letter dated 31st March 1665, addressed to Jai Singh, though the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa assures him that no help would be rendered to Shivaji during the course of Mughal action against him, on the other hand, the Viceroy confidentially issued contradictory orders to the Captain of Bassein on 18th April 1665 directing him, "...you should order (to your people) that nothing should be done from which they (the Mughals) could have suspicion (that the Portuguese show favour to Shivaji). However, if without the risk you could secretly give any aid with munitions or food-stuffs to Shivaji you should do it for money, because it is not desirable that if he is driven from his lands, the Mughals should remain the lords of them. But this should be done with such great caution that never should he (Jai Singh) be able to guess, much less to verify it. To Shivaji you will write how much better it is for him and for us that his retreat, in case it should be necessary to do so, should not be Chaul, but rather to Goa, where he would be more safe and we would not have to break with the Mughal..."[179]

As regards their naval policy towards the Marathas, thc Portuguese apparently refrained from entering into a direct altercation with Shivaji's navy. They did not try to needlessly restrict the movement of the Maratha vessels in the Konkan waters as a policy matter. At least, this appears from the Portuguese Viceroy's reply to Jai Singh when the latter complained to that the former 'gave back the ships (of Shivaji captured by the Portuguese navy) to Shivaji. The Portuguese ambassador to the Mughal was directed by the Viceroy vide a letter dated 22nd August 1665, to answer that the Portuguese could not keep back ships of Shivaji because 'he was not at war' with the Portuguese.[180] In the beginning of the year 1665 too, the Portuguese (after being certain that Shivaji did not intend to use his recently fitted naval vessels against their headquarters at Goa) did not come in way of the Basrur expedition of Shivaji. The Maratha army was apparently aboard the 85 Maratha frigates which sailed past the Portuguese Goa without any hurdle in February 1665. It is evident that the expansion of the Maratha territory around the Portuguese frontiers and the impressive growth of the Maratha navy in the 1660s were sending disturbing signals to the Portuguese. As a result the Portuguese were a bit perplexed as to what should be the policy they should adopt with respect to the Marathas.

Finally, they seem to have settled down in favour of a policy which helped maintain 'balance of power' in their immediate surroundings. The Portuguese, therefore, did not openly show any hostility towards Shivaji, but secretly sympathised with the detractors of Shivaji. We find the Portuguese thus, generally inclined in favour of the *Siddi* of Janjira or the Adil Shah of Bijapur whenever they had a conflict with Shivaji. Such a policy was practiced when they had signed a 'Pact of Friendship' with Shivaji in the year 1667 and further reiterated the 'Pact' in the year 1670. This was in stark contrast vis-à-vis the Portuguese role in the Mughal-Maratha conflict. The Portuguese seems to have realised their 'not so secure' (if not vulnerable altogether) military position on land. Their settlements were surrounded by the native powers including the mighty Mughals which posed a continuous threat to them. Moreover, in the 17th century they were facing severe shortage of men and military provisions to man their holdings. Such a situation had arisen due to the lack of finances as their commercial enterprise did not allow them such huge profits as were pocketed by them in the 15th and 16th centuries. Their 'exclusive monopoly over Ocean and Oceanic-Trade' in the Indian surroundings was ruthlessly undermined because of the aggressive policies adopted by the Dutch and the British. The Portuguese, under the prevailing circumstances, had, therefore, no options but to keep all the parties in good humour. They, however, put to use, in the best possible manner, their navy in order to overcome the handicap as enumerated above and stay in contention. Navy was still the real compelling means they possessed, through which they could easily get a good reckoning. As most of the Indian rulers lacked a vision regarding navy, the Portuguese exploited this weakness of the Indians to their own advantage. Hence while dealing with Shivaji, the Portuguese used their navy to apply pressure on him.

b) **Interaction with the British East India Company**: The relationship between the British and Shivaji had a jittery beginning. The British factory at Rajapur became the target of the Maratha troops early in 1660 not because of any long-standing enmity, but because of the Rajapur factors' role in the struggle between Shivaji and Bijapur.[181] The Rajapur factors provided security to the governor and declared that the said Junk belonged to them when asked specifically by Shivaji's men to hand it over to them.[182] The relation between the Company and Shivaji were thus, strained with the Marathas resorting to capturing and detaining a few of the English agents and officials. The Marathas had undertaken this particular military campaign by land. Any collaborating action by the Maratha navy, which could hardly have been in any organized form at that time, was out of question. But the Maratha failure to capture the Bijapur Junks, and more importantly the treasure they had on board, must have further strengthened Shivaji's resolve to have a competent naval establishment at the earliest. The Whole episode also provided a clue as to how a navy could be put to best use in case of an attack from land.

The English Company at Rajapur, however, was subjected to another Maratha exploit in March 1661. The reasons for the Maratha onslaught, this time, were not too difficult to comprehend. The Company was the defaulter. It was during the Bijapuri siege of Panhala (which was under Shivaji) that the British sided with the sovereign of Bijapur. In fact, a small British contingent actually participated in the action with the British flag flying high. At the same time, they provided ammunitions which were so crucial and much needed to conquer the fort. Soon afterwards, some of the British Company officials were captured by Shivaji and released only when the former had paid heavy ransom.[183] Whatever the reasons be, this engagement, like the earlier one of the previous year, was also devoid of any naval action by either side.

One of the significant outcomes of the sack of Rajapur was the subsequent closure of the Rajapur factory by the British. The second time which saw the East India Company and the Marathas - face to face, was during Shivaji's raid of Surat in 1664. Once again the British Company suffered economically, though the Maratha action was totally aimed against the Mughals. Apart form these stray incidents there was no other compelling reason for any interaction between the two on a higher (political) level. Shivaji, in any case, was more occupied with the expansion and consolidation of his *Swarajya*.

However, the Company's decision to transfer their principal settlement on the west coast to Bombay, once they had acquired the rights and control over Bombay from the British government in 1668, changed their relations and equations with respect to the Marathas. The Company's territory now shared a common boundary with the Maratha *Swarajya*. As a result, the interactions between the two not only began on a regular basis but became intimate too. The Portuguese were the other neighbours to the English at Bombay, who, it seems, where not quite supportive to the British Company's cause at

Bombay. The British were in the process of setting up a new establishment altogether, hence they required a continuous supply of the essentials. Such items could have made their way to Bombay either through the water-ways controlled by the Portuguese (through Salsette and Thane), or through Shivaji's domain by land. Any denial from the Portuguese side (since they had a common and, at the same time, conflicting economic interest with the British Company) would have naturally required the British to have a congenial orientation towards the Marathas. In other words, the circumstances pressed the British to adopt a moderate approach towards Shivaji. But the relation between the two fluctuated arising out of the exigencies - mostly economic, strategic or otherwise.

The Company's interests in India, by far, were essentially economic in nature. They needed to promote and protect their economic interests by being in line, and, at the same time, maintaining a realistic balance (of power) with the Indian political powers in their vicinity. In any case, they had to ensure that there was no hindrance in the procurement of the local commodities and that their trade and other commercial activities were running smoothly. Indeed, it was a difficult task in relation to the political situation on the west coast of India, late in the 1660s. During those times, Shivaji had gained considerable ground. He was virtually unstoppable as mission after missions, to bring him under control (by the Mughals or Bijapur), failed miserably. His heroic escape from Agra had undone all the advantages that the veteran Jai Singh had scored over him on behalf of the Mughals. The net result was that the Deccan was almost in turmoil with a depressing impact on trade and commerce. The trade routes via land which passed through the domain of the conflicting powers remained unsafe. The situation of the coastal traffic through the sea was also somewhat similar. We have already noted the rise and growth of Maratha navy in the preceding pages. The Maratha navy also served as a means to project the sovereignty of Maratha *Swarajya* all over the Konkan coastal waters. The upswing in the political fortunes of Shivaji on land had also provided a positive impetus to his naval activities. There were stray incidences of naval engagements between the Portuguese and the Marathas, but they had - by and large, maintained a friendly policy, with the Portuguese adopting a more conciliatory attitude towards Shivaji's 'audacious' enterprises so long as their own interests were not held back. The

Siddi of Janjira was contesting for sovereignty on the coastal waters of Konkan with the Marathas which further made the Konkan waters quite turbulent.

The most remarkable aspect of the Maratha-*Siddi* conflict was that both the sides solicited the friendship and support of the British towards the fulfilment of their respective causes. The reason was simple – the British Company had superior resources, particularly a strong navy and corresponding naval technology, at their disposal. There was a constant demand for the British ammunition and guns by the various political powers including the Marathas[184] Not only ammunitions, but demands for iron anchors and some other equipments were made, time and again, by the Bijapur rulers and even the Mughals. Hence, apart from purely trading matters, naval matters too, occupied a sizeable segment of the relations between the Company and the native rulers who commanded the coast line on the west coast of India. In the next few pages we will evaluate the factors which shaped and influenced the naval interactions between the British Company and Shivaji. The tactical, strategic and other compulsions would be a subject of close scrutiny.

From the study of Factory Records and some other documents, it can be inferred that the *Siddi* element was 'the key consideration' in most of the naval interactions between the Shivaji and the Company. A brief survey of Maratha naval activities with respect to the *Siddi* of Janjira has already been attempted in the preceding pages. It has been noted that the *Siddi* was on the look out for reliable allies in order to counter the pressure of the Marathas. *Siddi* had virtually little to hold on the Konkan coast. The island fort of Janjira was not spacious enough to have either accommodated the *Siddi* fleet or sustained the *Siddi* naval activities in the light of the Maratha naval threat. The *Siddi* needed to protect his fleet from the fury of the monsoon of the Arabian Sea, hence needed a harbour safe from the Maratha threat. Bombay harbour of the Company used to be his first and the only preference. At the same time, the *Siddi* desperately wanted to use the Bombay harbour as a launch-pad for his naval raids against Shivaji's possessions on the coast nearby. He knew it well that the British at Bombay were favourably disposed towards him in his struggle against Shivaji as he had managed to get the supplies from them in a secret manner whenever cornered by the Marathas. This had made him audacious and arrogant as time passed by. As a result, at times he did not even consider it prudent to obtain the permission of the Company to use the Bombay harbour for the wintering of his vessels or even conducting naval raids on the adjacent Maratha territories from Bombay.

Fortunately, for the Marathas, the event of Bombay becoming the principal settlement of the Company brought some changes as their relations with the British could now be purposefully defined. A significant outcome, at the same time, was the firm stand taken by the Bombay authorities not to allow the *Siddi* to exploit the facilities of the Bombay harbour against the interests of Shivaji. This does not mean, however, that the British had stopped sympathising with the *Siddi*.

Once the *Siddi* was admitted to the Mughal service (in 1671), it was more difficult for the Company officials at Bombay to keep the *Siddi* demands under check. There appears to be some difference of opinion between the Company's Bombay and Surat officials as to how to deal with the *Siddi*. While the Surat officials operated around the Mughal territory, their interest was naturally to keep the Mughal governor of Surat contented. Hence, they did not want Bombay to refuse courtesy to the *Siddi* who was, after all, a Mughal official. On the other hand, Bombay did not have any virtual contact with the Mughal territory as it was surrounded by the Portuguese and Maratha territories. Any hostility form either of these powers was sufficient to starve the island of the essential provisions. Moreover, most of the coast down south, from Bombay to Goa, was also commanded by the Marathas, hence Bombay could ill afford to keep the Marathas in bad taste by openly siding with their enemies. Shivaji, after all, had become a big power to be simply ignored.

While formulating a naval policy with respect to Shivaji, who was making the best use of the geographical surroundings to his advantage, the British came across certain practical difficulties. First amongst them was the Maratha tactics to avoid direct confrontation with the English vessels in the open sea. The English vessels were comparatively large and hence, had to be dependent on the wind to effectively manoeuvre in the coastal waters. On the other hand, the Maratha vessels were relatively small and could be rowed up to a certain point where they could catch wind through the sail. Their manoeuvring was, therefore, easy which made them more effective in the naval combats against the Europeans. The Maratha vessels lacked effective artillery. At the same time, they could stand no chance against the fire power of the European vessels. To overcome this handicap, the Marathas preferred boarding action rather than a head on engagement. They boarded the European vessel after it was dismasted[185] and surrounded by the Maratha war boats containing professional warriors who would quickly get into the enemy vessel and engage them in a duel.

The British/Europeans, on the other hand could not follow the native crafts in their hot chase because they did not have the correct details of the submerged rocks or reefs in the coastal surroundings. They seemed to have understood this problem hence we find the Company administrators directing the factory officials etc. to map the routes of the coastal water and also to take 'soundings' of the different locations on way.[186] One of the prominent causes of the failure of the British to prevent Shivaji from occupying and fortifying the island of Khanderi appears to be their ignorance about the submerged coastal rocks as the 'soundings' of the bay of Khanderi had not been done.

The Europeans indeed commanded strong artillery, but this advantage was, more than often, neutralised by the tactical superiority of the Maratha navy. The Marathas knew that the guns/canons were not placed everywhere on board the ship, and that it took some time to take aim on the enemy vessel.[187] At times, the direction of the entire vessel had to be changed in order to take aim. This was a time consuming as well as tedious process as it also depended on the availability of wind and a favourable wind direction. By the time the big European ships would manoeuvre, the Maratha vessels would have either changed their positions (as they were small and were not much dependent on wind) or made good their escape. As such the Company's primary interest was in trade, hence it did not consider prudent to engage in ramming action against the enemy vessels as it would have resulted in a bigger economic loss.

Another shortcoming of the Company was the hugeness of the vessels. The big size of the vessel had two obvious disadvantages. One, it could not venture into the shallow waters of the bays and creeks because of its burden, and two, its speed and manoeuvrability was quite slow to have made any impact on the flat bottomed, light and fast boats of the Marathas or other native rulers. The British were also aware of this particular shortcoming and sincerely wanted to get over that. In some of the correspondences of the Company we find that the officials express their helplessness to do any thing concrete against the Maratha small and fast vessels in comparison to the bigger ships of the Company. At the same time they asked for the permission to get a few of 'such vessels' built so that they could take punitive actions against 'those pirates/Malabaris' the next time.

Whether the Europeans were genuinely keen to give a real or tough naval battle to Shivaji's navy is another significant aspect - which needs to be examined carefully. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, the Europeans (the British, Dutch and the French, in particular) were too new in this part of the world and were more guided by the incentives of trade monopoly and profits. This was coming in a natural way, i.e., without being militarily hostile to the native powers. The era of colonial expansion, in a real sense, was far away. Moreover, these foreign powers did not perceive any realistic or grave threat to their activities from the Maratha side, their navy in particular. There are references which despise the entire Maratha naval establishment and describe their naval vessels as pitiful things.[188] In their correspondences they seem to be more worried about the disruption in the procurement of goods and their despatch to the respective destinations rather than the menace of the Maratha naval establishment as such. Hence, to ensure that there was no hindrance to their commercial activities, they preferred to maintain amicable relations with the native rulers as far as possible. As regards Shivaji, his military exploits were too audacious to have escaped anyone's attention. The Europeans, therefore, also admit in many of their correspondences that Shivaji had grown in strength had become master of a considerable stretch of land. It was, therefore, obvious that they could not afford to antagonise Shivaji by going for a direct and declared war on him. They were rather deliberate in their effort to avoid a direct clash with Shivaji on land and water alike.

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[1] Whiteway, R. S., *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17; see also, Stephens Morse H., *Albuquerque*, p. 21.

[2] Panikkar, K. M., *Asia and…*, p. 30. Panikkar has also discussed at length, the implications of the arrival of Vasco da Gama on the trading network on the western coast of India.

[3] Aiyyar K. V. K., *The Zamorins of Calicut*, Chapter VIII, (pp.123-135).

[4] Pannikkar, *Asia and…*, pp. 28-29.

[5] Ballard, G. A., *Rulers of the Indian Ocean*, p. 45-49.

[6] Whiteway, R. S., *op. cit.*, pp. 117-18; see also, Stephens Morse H., *op. cit.*, pp. 36-39; and Aiyyar K. V. K.,*op. cit.*, pp. 170-172 (Chap XII); See also, Nambiar, O. K., Portuguese Pirates and Indian Seamen, (chapter 'Indo-Egyptian Axis'), pp. 130-145; In 1508, however, a combination of the Egyptian fleet commanded by Amir Hussain and Gujarati fleet under Admiral Malik Ayaz, had been successful in defeating a Portuguese fleet off the coast of Chaul. See, *History and Culture of Indian People*, Vol. VI, p. 166.

[7] For a general discussion on Albuquerque's exploits and success, see, Stephens Morse H., *op. cit.*; see also Pearson M. N., *The Portuguese in India*, (Chapter I).

[8] Mansel Longworth Dames, (tr.) *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, [2 Volumes], Vol. I, p. 166. Goa was occupied from the Adil Shah of Bijapur on 4th of March, 1510. Cf. *History and Culture of Indian People*, Vol. VI., pp. 424-25.

[9] Aiyyar K. V. K., *op. cit.*, (Chap XII); See also, *History and Culture of Indian People*, Vol. VII., p. 398.

[10] Danvers, F. C., *The Portuguese in India*, Vol. I, p. 401-02; See also, *History and Culture of Indian People*, Vol. VII., p. 392.

[11] Ibid., p. 394.

[12] Qaisar, A. J., *Indian Response to European Technology*, p. 44

[13] Ibid., pp. 394-98.

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[14] Stephens Morse H., *op. cit.*, pp. 181-82; see also Whiteway R. S., *op. cit.*, pp. 257-262; See also, *History and Culture of Indian People*, Vol. VII, p. 398.

[15] There is a reference of the disastrous fate of a contingent of Bijapuri forces (supported by the Mughals) which had captured the 'island of the dead' (probably a small island in the vicinity of Goa) in 1570. The occupying forces were totally destroyed by the artillery bombardment from the Portuguese fleet which had surrounded the island, thereby making any escape (of the Bijapuri troops) impossible. See, Pissurlencar P, *Portuguese-Marathe Sambandha*, p. 108.

[16] Captain Hawkins visited the Mughal Emperor Jahangir in 1609 at Agra. The Portuguese intrigued with the nobles at court and in Gujarat against the English and they succeeded too. Jahangir refused trading concessions to Hawkins who left Agra in 1611. See, Roberts P. E., *History of British in India*, p. 24.

[17] Swally, a few miles north to port of Surat, was the port which was used by the British East India Company for commercial purposes in their early years in India. The port was also better than those located in the mouth of river Tapti as it was navigable during low tides too. It seems that Captain Best, in October, 1613, had he managed to obtain a treaty with the Governor of Surat allowing trading privileges, subject to ratification by the Emperor. The Portuguese, however, were opposed to it and attacked the English vessels on the 29th of October. The British, however, defeated and destroyed the Portuguese fleet in the action, which lasted for a couple of days.

[18] EF, (1621-23), p. 72.

[19] See, Forrest, G. W., *Maratha Series*, Vol. II, p. 377. Bombay was handed over by Antonio De Mello Castro, the Viceroy of Goa, to Humphrey Cook, on 14th of Jan. 1665.

[20] Bombay has been described as 'nothing but a group of small islands, with numerous backwaters, producing rank vegetation, at one time dry, and at another overflowed by the sea. So unwholesome, in consequence was the situation reckoned, that that the older travelers agreed in

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allotting not more than three years for the average duration of life there...' Hamilton Walter, *A Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindostan*, p. 153.

[21] Kail. O. C., *The Dutch in India*, p. 11.

[22] Ibid., p. 12.

[23] Ibid, pp. 30-31.

[24] The Dutch had made Ceylone their headquarters. See, Dodwell, H. H., (ed.) *The Cambridge History of India* (Vol. V : British India), pp. 36, 41-42.

[25] For more details, please see, Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India*, Chapter II.

[26] See, Kail, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

[27] Ibid., p. 77; see also English Records on Shivaji, (ERS henceforth), Vol. I, no. 345, etc.

[28] Hatalkar, V. G., *Relations Between the French and the Marathas (1668-1815)*, pp. 7-8.

[29] For more on the conflict between the Dutch and the French, see, Dodwell, H. H., *op. cit.*

[30] Pawgee N. B., *Our Hindu Navy and Maritime Activities from Vedic Times Down to the Days of the Maratha Empire*, pp.60-61.

[31] *Ain-i-Akbari* (ed.) Blochmann, Vol. II, pp. 202-03; The crew consisted of the following categories of men: (a) *Nakhuda* or the Commander of the ship (b) *Muallim* or the pilot (c) *Tandil* or sailors (d) *Sarang* or supervisor [for landing/docking etc.] (e) *Bhandari* or the store-keeper (f) *Sukkangir* or the one who steered the ship (g) *Karrani* or the accountant (h) *Nakhoda khasb* or the one who helped in lading/unlading (j) *Panjari* or the one who would be on the pole of the mast to tell directions/location of enemy vessels etc. (k) *Gumti* or those who used to bail out [throw] water from the deck (l) *Top-andaz* or the gunners (m) *Kharwah* or those who managed the sails and other instruments of navigation. Cf. Mookerjee R. K., *op. cit.*, p. 148-49; see also Pawgee N. B., *op. cit.*

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[32] Abul Fazl writes about an 'Admiralty Department' headed by the *Mir Bahri* or the Lord of Admiralty. His duties were enumerated as follows - to build boats of all kinds for river transport; to fit out strong boats for transporting elephants; to recruit expert seamen; to supervise the rivers; to impose, collect or remit river duties and tolls. A fleet (*Nowwara*) consisting of 768 armed vessels and boats, was stationed at Dacca to protect the coast of Bengal against the Maghs and the Arakanese pirates. [Quoted by Mookerjee R. K., *op. cit.*, chapters II & III of part 2].

[33] Majumdar, R. C., *Advanced History of India*, p. 465. It cites the episode of the attack of Qasim Ali Khan, the Governor of Bengal, on the Portuguese at Hugli; Qaisar, A. J., [p. 44] *Impact of European Technology on Indian Culture,* gives reference of contemporary painting depicting the Mughal assault on Hugli.

[34] Khobrekar, V. G., *Konkan*: *From the Earliest to 1818*, p. 39.

[35] Mansel Longworth Dames, (tr.) *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Vol. I, p. 161.

[36] Danvers, F. C., *The Portuguese in India*, (2 Volumes) Vol. I, p. 400.

[37] Ibid., p. 1.

[38] The working of the *Cartaz* system has been discussed at length by M. N. Pearson in his book *The Portuguese in India*, pp. 38-39; Om Prakash, *op. cit.*, describes the *Cartaz* system as an instrument of monopoly, p. 44.

[39] There is a possibility that this money was utilized for the purpose of raising a strong army, so that the entire area could be taken under control.

[40] Apte, D. V., 'When Did Shivaji Start His Career of Independence', in *The Indian Historical Records Commission* (Proceedings of Meeting), XVIIth Session, Baroda, 1940, pp. 44-46. Apte has tried to establish that the year 1656 marks the beginning of the independent career of Shivaji. His conclusion is based on the assumption that scores of letter written by Shahji to the officers of the Jagir of Poona could be found pertaining to the period 1636 to 1655 but not a single letter written after 6th Dec, 1655 could be found.

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[41] Forrest, *Maratha Series*, Vol. I, p. 9.

[42] Apte D. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46.

[43] Duff, Grant, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. P, 118. (Duff has based his statement on the basis of the original letter from Aurangzeb.)

[44] E F, (1655-60), p. 235.

[45] Portuguese letter dated 28 November, 1657, quoted by Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 41; A contemporary English letter also suggests that Kalyan-Bhiwandi were under the control of Shivaji – see ERS, Vol. I, no. 160.

[46] Ibid. The same Portuguese letter (of the year 1656) refers to Shivaji as the son of Shahji.

[47] *Sabhasad Bakhar,* pp. 84-86.

[48] The Europeans at that time could be found on both sides of the Indian peninsula occupying the most convenient locations as far as the trade/commercial centers on the coast were concerned.

[49] *Rajniti*, p. 48.

[50] Quoted by Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[51] Sardesai, G. S., *New History of the Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 219.

[52] Ruby Maloni, 'European Enclaves in the Konkan (16th -18th Centuries)' in Gaikwad D. S. (ed.), *Some Aspects of Medieval India*, Mumbai, 2006, p. 134.

[53] Surendra Gopal, *Commerce and Crafts in Gujarat*, p. 173.

[54] *Rajniti*, p. 31.

[55] S. N. Sen, *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*, 155.

[56] *Rajniti*, p. 32.

[57] Kulkarni, V. B., *op. cit.*, p. 163; **Italics mine.**

[58] ERS, Vol. I, no. 52; See also, letter no. 106 for overseas trade carried on during the time of Shivaji.

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[59] Salt was commodity being produced chiefly at Pen, Panvel etc. during Shivaji's time; see Kulkarni, A. R. *Maharastra in the Age of Shivaji*, p. 233. For a reference of Shivaji's '**salt fleet**', See also, ERS, Vol. I, no. 189.

[60] For a discussion on the pattern of rice trade on the western coast, see Subrahmanyam Sanjay, 'The Portuguese, the Port of Basrur, and the Rice Trade, 1600-50, in *IESHR*, Vol. 21 (4), 1984; See also ERS, Vol. I, no. 189.

[61] Original Correspondence, quoted by Desai, W. S., *Bombay and the Marathas*, p. 10.

[62] *Rajniti*, p. 49.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Unpublished document, quoted by Kulkarni, G. T., 'State and Individual: Tax Incidence under the Adil Shahis (1580-1656 A.D.)', in Gaikwad D. S. (ed.), ibid., p. 82; this document does not throw any light on the meaning and nature of taxes under reference. For more on similar kinds of taxes/duties, see, Kulkarni, Sumitra, 'Port, Customs Duties and Coastal Trade in 18th Century North Konkan', in Seshan Radhika (ed.), *Medieval India: Problems and Possibilities*, Jaipur, 2006; pp. 182-196

[65] Kulkarni, A. R, *op.cit.*, p. 233.

[66] See for example, EF (1642-45), p. 92, 216 etc; (1646-50), p. 259; (1651-54), p. 224, etc.

[67] Das Gupta, Ashin, 'The Early 17th Century Crisis in the Western Indian Ocean and the Rise of Gujarati Shipping in Early 18th Century', in Arunachalam B., (ed.), *Essays in Maritime Studies*, pp. 55-65.

[68] *Rajniti,* p. 49.

[69] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, pp. 89-90.

[70] Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[71] Cosme de Guarda in Sen, S. N., *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji*, pp. 111-112.

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[72] *Sabhasad Bakhar,* p. 94. According to *Sabhasad Bakhar*, there were almost twenty seven such (foreign) powers against which Shivaji fought naval wars.

[73] Ibid., p. 91.

[74] Quoted by Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.,* p. 42.

[75] The Portuguese records refer to such Maratha boats as *Sanguiceis.*

[76] It is stated that two of Portuguese artisans namely Roe Leitao Viegas and his brother Fernao Leitao Viegas supervised some 340 workmen, Portuguese and others, and helped Shivaji to construct the fighting vessels. Cited by Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.

[77] ERS, Vol. I, p. 48.

[78] Ibid., p. 235 etc

[79] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, pp. 93-94. It is interesting to note that during the time Kanhoji Angre as many as 51 different types of Maratha-boats were being used. A detailed is provided by Dhabu, D. G., *Kulabkar Angre Sarkhel*, pp. 378-79.

[80] Ibid., p. 94.

[81] There are numerous references of the English administrators allowing the *Siddi* fleet to winter in the Bombay/Mazagaon dockyard; see, for example, ERS, Vol. I, nos. 167, 168, etc.

[82] Many of the Portuguese documents of that period point towards the fact that the Portuguese were favourably disposed towards the *Siddi* and helped the latter in various ways against Shivaji. One such Portuguese letter, in fact, tells that the Portuguese had induced the *Siddi* to accept the Portuguese overlord-ship in the year in 1667. Ouoted by Pisurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 47.

[83] Quoted by Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 13; see also, Orme, II, p. 35

[84] *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* of Khafi Khan, (tr. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 258). Khafi Khan writes, "Shivaji had secured several islands in the sea by means of a fleet which he had formed...He had also built many forts in those parts..."

[85] Quoted by Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 44

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[86] Ibid. p. 46.

[87] *Sabhasad Bakhar*, p. 94.

[88] *Koli* is a term used to denote the Fishermen tribe of the coast of Maharastra.

[89] Quoted by Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[90] Ibid.

[91] ERS, Vol. I., no. 333.

[92] See, ERS, Vol. I, nos. 328, 333, 340, etc. The Mughal chronicler Khafi Khan (Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 345) also refers to various activities at Surat which was under the English.

[93] Quoted by Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 09.

[94] *Rajniti,* p. 51.

[95] ERS, Vol. I, nos. 235, 242.

[96] Quoted by Pissurlencar, P. *op. cit.*, p 48.

[97] Fawcett, Sir Charles, *English Factory Records, New Series*, Vol. I, pp. 56-57.

[98] For a general understanding of ship-building activities in India, see, Chaudhary, K. N., *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean*, (Chap – 7); Qaiser, A. J., *op. cit.*, (IESHR), Das Gupta Ashin, *op. cit.*

[99] Jain Kirti, 'Boat Building and the Son Kolis of the Raigad District, Maharastra', in *Marine Archaeology*, (Vol. 4), pp. 90-91.

[100] Aitchison, C. U., *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, pp. 296-97; See also Forrest, G. W., *Maratha Series*, Vol. II, pp. 100-01.

[101] *Sabhasad Bakhar,* p. 94.

[102] Ibid.

[103] ERS, Vol. I, no. 238; The cause of this letter was Shivaji's apparent show of strength as a large number of Maratha vessels were noticed hovering around the mouth of Bombay harbour. This

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was enough to alarm the English settlement of Bombay. Though no engagement seems to have taken place as the Maratha vessels

[104] *Sabhasad Bakhar,* p. 87.

[105] For more information on the *Bhandari* community, see, The Gazetteer of the Bombay City and Island, Vol. I, pp. 231-236.

[106] The *Bhandaris,* by their hereditary profession, were toddy tappers. They could climb up on the trunk of the palm tree with ease, hence their services would have been meaningful and significant in manning the mast of the sea-going vessels and inform about the location of an enemy ship in the vicinity to the captain of the vessel. The English Records pertaining to Bombay Factory took note of the Bhandaris as 'being a very useful set of people...being of a military caste and having on several occasions behaved with courage...' See Forrest, G. W., Home Series, Vol. II, p. 65.

[107] *Sabhasad Bakhar,* p. 84.

[108] For example, Darya Sarang was the chief Admiral and Daulat Khan was also a prominent naval commander during the reign of Shivaji; See, SPS, no. 1724, 2054, 2055, 2121, 2137, 2192 etc; See also, ERS, Vol. II, no. 397.

[109] ERS, Vol. I, no. 107; See also, Sarkar, J., *op. cit.*, pp. 231-33.

[110] ERS, Vol. I, no. 309.

[111] For more information on the *Koli* community, see, The Gazetteer of the Bombay City and Island, Vol. 1, pp. 227-231.

[112] Jain Kirti, 'Boat Building...' *op. cit.*, pp. 89-91.

[113] Tactics is the actual use of available resources at the ground level. In a naval encounter, these people, with their immense understanding of the topography of the coast could have played a vital role, viz. they could have misled and attracted the enemy vessels to a difficult/dangerous waters; or would have made good their own escape, when hard pressed, to the numerous inlets, creeks or bays with shallow waters.

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[114] *Rajniti*, pp. 19-20.

[115] Ibid., p. 48.

[116] Ibid., p. 51.

[117] *Rajniti*, p. 49; See also, *Sabhasad Bakhar,* p. 87.

[118] Pearson, M. N., 'The Portuguese in India and Indian Ocean: An overview of Sixteenth Century' [Chapter IV], in Pius Malekandathil Pius, Jamal Mohammad Jamal (eds.), *The Portuguese, Indian Ocean and European Bridgeheads (1500-1800).*

[119] Whiteway, R. S., *op. cit.*, p. 172.

[120] *Jedhe Shakawali Karina*, (translated & edited), Kulkarni, A. R., p. 299; Cf. Sharma, S. R., *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[121] Cited by Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[122] Sharma, S. R., *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[123] ERS, Vol. I., no. 333.

[124] *Rajniti*, p. 50.

[125] See, Duff, Grant, History of the Marathas, Vol. I, p. 137. Duff writes, "He (Shivaji) built Sindeedroog or Malwan... He rebuilt and strengthened Kolabah; repaired Severndroog and Viziadroog and prepared vessel at all these places...

[126] *Sabhasad Bakhar,* pp. 89-90.

[127] Abbe Carre, in Sen S. N., *Foreign Biographies...*pp. 154-55.

[128] *Rajniti*, p. 51.

[129] Whiteway, R. S., *op. cit.*, p. 172.

[130] *Rajniti*, p. 49

[131] Ibid., p. 50.

[132] Ibid., p. 51.

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[133] Da Cunha, *Notes on the History and Antiquities of Chaul and Bassein*, p. 67; See also, Fawcett, Charles, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 58.

[134] Bombay has been described as 'nothing but a group of small islands, with numerous backwaters, producing rank vegetation, at one time dry, and at another overflowed by the sea. So unwholesome, in consequence was the situation reckoned, that that the older travelers agreed in allotting not more than three years for the average duration of life there...' Hamilton Walter, *A Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindostan*, p. 153.

[135] Fawcett, Charles, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 6, 9.

[136] Ibid. p. 8; see also, Duff, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 194.

[137] Ibid., p. 54.

[138] Gun-powder was being manufactured by making use of the saltpeter obtained from the Karwar region. The British factors frequently complained of the bad smell of the saltpeter. For more details, see, Fawcett, Charles, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 30.

[139] *Siddi*'s coastal possessions were not safe for sheltering of their ships during the rainy season because of the absence of fortification as well as because of its vicinity to the Maratha territory.

[140] See, Om Prakash, The Dutch Factories in India, (1618-21). This book consists of translations of many of the Dutch documents. Regarding the quality and sea-worthiness of the Indian vessels, the Dutch documents put on record that, 'many of these ships were good enough to make a few return trips to Europe too'.

[141] Khafi Khan, (in Elliot and Dowson, History of India... Vol. VII), pp. 350-55. According to his narrative, the Mughal ship had 80 guns and 110 muskets on board.

[142] Ashin Das Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[143] See, Mukherjee R. K., *op. cit.*, [chapters II & III of part 2], p. 151.

[144] The *Siddi* chief had definitely changed loyalties from the Bijapur Sultans towards the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb by the year 1670. It is said that the *Siddi* admiral Fateh Khan was hard

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pressed by Shivaji's military expedition against him in 1669 and was about to surrender the Janjira fort to him as no help was coming from his Bijapur overlord. However, *Siddi* Fateh was prevented form doing so. In a palace revolt he was also killed by his deputies. The rebels then made a request to Aurangazeb that they would be willing to administer Janjira for him in return for the imperial help against Shivaji. Aurangzeb is said to have immediately sent a fleet to relieve the *Siddi*. EF (1668-1669), p. 242-243; See also ERS, Vol. I, no. 336, etc.

[145] Fawcett, Charles, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 36, 62, 215, etc.

[146] Naval operations, at that time, apart from the active involvement in commercial activities, consisted of patrolling the coast line, regulation of coastal traffic, providing protection to the native commercial vessels and the vessels of other nations which purchased his passes, keeping the piratical activities (which were rampant at that time) under check, fighting against the enemies on the sea, projection of the Maratha sovereignty on the sea, etc.

[147] Nairne, A. K., *History of the Konkan*, pp. 73-74.

[148] *Rajniti*, pp. 46-48.

[149] Pearson, M. N., 'The Portuguese in India and Indian Ocean, *op. cit.*, Chap – IV.

[150] Kalita, B. C., *Military Activities in Medieval Assam*, pp. 60-63, 66, 75, 81-83, 120, 156, etc.

[151] Richard, J. F., *The Mughal Empire*, p. 167.

[152] For more on related topics, see, Arunachalam B, 'The Heaven Finding Art in Indian Navigational Traditions and its application in Indian Navigational Cartography' *Indica* (43), 1985; Charles O. Frake, 'Cognitive Maps of Time and Tide Among Medieval Seafarers', in *Man*, New Series, Vol. 20, No. 2 (June, 1985), pp. 254-270; Barbara M. Kreutz, 'Mediterranean Contributions to the Medieval Mariner's Compass', in *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (July, 1973), pp. 367-383; Frederic C Lane, 'The Economic Meaning of the Invention of Compass', in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. LXVIII, no. 3, April, 1963, pp. 605-617.

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[153] Strategy could be defined as an overall, general plan of action to be applied against the enemy, whereas Tactics consists of 'on-ground application' of the strategy, taking into consideration the actual situation.

[154] Bhaware N. G., 'Castes, Favours, Patronage And Privileges Under Shivaji's Rule', pp. 208-10, in Kamble B. R., (ed.), *Studies in Shivaji And His Times.*

[155] Sarkar, J., *Shivaji and His Times*, p. 226; Sarkar has based his statement on the Surat Factory Records.

[156] *Sabhasad Bakhar,* p. 65.

[157] Ibid., p. 66; This event must have taken place by 1660, though *Sabhasad* has not assigned any particular date for this.

[158] Ibid., p. 67; *Sabhasad* writes that the forts of Lingana and Birwadi were constructed on an adjoining hill.

[159] Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[160] ERS Vol. I, no. 106, etc.

[161] Sarkar, J., *Shivaji and* ..., p. 260. The British factors, by that time, had a legitimate reason to be perturbed as Shivaji had mercilessly plundered Surat early in that year) the ever-growing presence of the Maratha fleet off the Konkan coast.

[162] ERS, Vol. I, no. 96; See also Sarkar, J., *op. cit.*, p. 227.

[163] Cited by Sarkar, J., *op. cit.*, p. 261.

[164] Quoted by Chauhan, R. R. S., 'The Siddis in The Indian Ocean Regions', in Mathew, K. S., (ed.) *Indian Ocean And Cultural Interaction*, p. 40; See also Pissurlencar, P. *op. cit.*, p. 47.

[165] EF (1668-1669), p. 242. The date mentioned in this letter is 16 Oct, 1669.

[166] Ibid; see also ERS, Vol. I, no. 171.

[167] EF (1668-1669), p. 243.

[168] SPS, no. 848.

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[169] Ibid; see also SPS, 883. It seems that the English Company was interested in shifting from Surat to Danda-Rajapuri.

[170] Sarkar, J., *Shivaji and ...*, pp. 170-74, 236, 262, etc; The Siddi secured royal admiralty and a *Mansab* of 900, in addition to a *Jagir* the yearly income form which was worth Rs. 3 lakh. The Siddi was also obliged to protect trade and *Haj* pilgrims frequenting from the Surat port. See also Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

[171] ERS, Vol. I, no. 479.

[172] ERS, Vol. II, no. 418.

[173] ERS Vol. II, nos. 364, 365, 367, 369, 373, 374, 377, 378, 379 etc.

[174] ERS Vol. II, no. 472.

[175] Ibid.

[176] See, Kail, O. C. *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45 for more on the Anglo Dutch conflicts in India.

[177] This included the territory from upper Chaul down to Basrur (comprising of Dabhol, Rajapur, Vengurla, Sadashivgad; Dabhol being the most important among these), excluding the Portuguese controlled lower Chaul, Goa, Honavar, Gangolli and Basrur.

[178] Letter to the King of Portugal from Vice-Rei Conde de San Vincente, dated 20 September, 1667, quoted by Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[179] *Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings*, Vol. IX, p. 112-13, cited by Bal Krishna, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 499-501.

[180] Ibid., p. 503.

[181] It is believed that the governor of Bijapur had collected all his treasure in the wake of the Maratha raid and had slipped into the sea in one of the Junks of the Bijapur state.

[182] See EF, (1655-60), pp. 354-58.

[183] ERS, Vol. I, no. 57.

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[184] For example, see SPS, no. 1389, 1399, 1409, 1431, 1592, 1675, 1699, 1803, 2219 etc; see also, ERS, Vol. II, no. 279.

[185] There were various ways of striking off the mast of the enemy vessels. It could be done by gun shots, fire balls, arrows, hurling stones or even by managing to climb the mast of the enemy ship while the enemy was surrounded and engaged from all the sides by way of concentrating more numbers – both in terms of boats and men, at that point.

[186] See, for example, SPS, no. 1229. This document suggests that the English wanted to take an estimate of the depth of the coastal waters in between Pen and Bombay, for navigational purposes. Another document (SPS no. 1528) gives us the idea that for trading purpose, the region surrounding Nagothana was to be charted and mapped by the British. This included ascertaining the depth of the river, its width, area of the small boats which could easily enter the creeks, levels of tide etc. Similar information was to be obtained regarding Pen and Batty.

[187] The screw was yet not invented. The screw would have helped manoeuvring the canons viz. adjusting heights, turning the direction of the turret at ease etc. See, Parker Geoffrey, *The Military Revolution, Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, pp. 107-108.

[188] ERS, Vol. I, no. 96; SPS, no. 1671, etc. reports that apart from having (insignificant) small boats and vessels, the crew/pilots/*Nakhodas*, etc. were also quite unprofessional and not experienced regarding seafaring or associated professional naval tasks..

4. FROM SAMBHAJI TO KANHOJI ANGRE

I

CONTINUITY AND COMPULSIONS:

Sambhaji, the son and successor of Shivaji, inherited a well organised and spirited naval establishment. The Maratha navy, at the death of Shivaji, was undeniably an authority to reckon with. At that time of Sambhaji's succession, the Maratha naval establishment was actively complimented by a large number of coastal and sea-forts. The boat-building enterprise was accorded high priority and fighting boats of different types and sizes were constructed depending upon the nature of marine-operations. The vessels were also suitably equipped with fire power to make them more menacing. For effective functioning, the naval administration was further streamlined during the rule of Shivaji by way of the creation of 'naval-*subahs*'. In other words, the Maratha navy had become a crucial element of the military strategy of the Maratha *Swarajya*. Going by the size and organisation of the naval establishment, it may perhaps not be erroneous to regard the Maratha navy as the first of its kind amongst the lot of native powers in India in the late 17th century.

As the head of the Maratha *Swarajya*, Sambhaji's naval tasks were rather pre-determined and obvious - he needed to complete the unfinished assignments of his predecessor. It had been a life-long mission of Shivaji to eliminate (or subdue) the *Siddi* from the vicinity of the Konkan coast. Ultimately, however, Shivaji ran out of time; and his untimely death left this mission un-accomplished. Hence, it was natural that the task of removal of the challenge of the *Siddi* was going to be pursued by Sambhaji in the same spirit as that of his father. On the other hand, for the *Siddi*, the situation had quite changed during the last couple of years. He was in a much better position ever since he had shifted his loyalties and allegiance from Bijapur Sultans to the Mughals. As a result, the *Siddi* was now totally free from any threat originating from the land-side. His control over the island of Underi acted as a strategic deterrence to any Maratha action originating from their island fortress of Khanderi which was close by. Moreover, the British at Bombay, who were also the strategic partners of the *Siddi*, made the latter's position more secure on the Konkan coast. The *Siddi,* thus, freely roved along the Konkan Coast and exercised his authority as the 'Mughal Admiral'. Sambhaji could well comprehend that under the changed circumstances the reduction of *Siddi* required more than mere crude military force. He understood that in this venture, therefore, the Maratha navy was going to play the most decisive part; but, at the same time, he needed to devise superior tactics so that the *Siddi*'s attention could be diverted both on land as well as on water. This was certainly a difficult task to accomplish as it required both - the resourcefulness as well as the imagination, of a military genius.

Fortunately, the naval department, which Sambhaji had inherited, was one of the best managed and most efficient units of the Maratha military organisation. The Maratha Admirals Mai Nayak Bhandari and Daulat Khan had, in the past, distinguished themselves in the naval engagements with the *Siddi* as well as the Europeans. Sambhaji could rely upon these illustrious commanders along with the likes of Govind Kanhoji Angre, Govind Das Jadhav, Dadaji Prabhu Deshpande, etc., who comprised the list of the other better known Maratha naval officers of the time. Some other names associated with the Maratha naval establishment were: Kawaji Muhammad, Santaji Pawla, *Siddi* Misri (brother-in-law of *Siddi* Sambul), Jagoji Pharjand and Nagoji Waghmare (the *Havaldar*s of Khanderi, Kulaba respectively), Antaji Bhaskar and Tanaji (both working as Majumdars, the latter being posted at Janjira Rajkot).[1]

As regards the numerical strength of the Maratha fleet, it could be reasonably assumed that very little had changed in the period between the death of Shivaji and the succession of Sambhaji. We have rather convincing reasons to believe that Sambhaji paid equal attention towards the apparatus and expansion of the Maratha fleet since the beginning of his reign. A British (East India Company's) letter dated 4th Nov 1680, originated from Bombay (addressed to Surat) reads, "We have certain news of the Raja's (Sambhaji's) Armada, consisting of about 50 sails of Ghurabs and Galvats, all fitted at Rajapur and have on board them between 4000 to 5000 men under the command of Daulat Khan..."[2] Though the above reference is not indicative of the actual strength of the Maratha fleet, however, it does give us an idea as to how a naval contingent could be readied for the purpose of a specific task on the Konkan waters.

Like his predecessor, Sambhaji also experienced the limitations in terms of fire power, particularly canons, to equip his vessels with. No doubt, therefore, he was tactful in dealing with the Europeans for the supply of ammunitions for his vessels. It seems that guns and ammunitions were supplied by the French to the Marathas in the year 1681. Such arrangements, however, were not going to continue forever and could not be totally relied upon at the time of dire need. Hence, to do away with the dependency on the Europeans, especially in the matters of arms and ammunitions, Sambhaji came up with the novel idea of having his own foundry and ammunition manufacturing unit. The Portuguese accounts tell us about Sambhaji's request to them (the Portuguese) to allow unhindered passage of a few Maratha boats (apparently laden with sulphur, saltpetre etc.) coming from Malabar and Karnatak. The supply of these materials was intended to be used for the production of ammunitions in the two factories that were to be constructed in Kudal and Dicholi during the year 1682.[3] It should be noted, however, that it was not before the Peshwa period, that any progress towards the establishment of a modern foundry could be made. The endeavour of Sambhaji, in any case, was to maintain normal relations particularly with the French and the Dutch. The Europeans Companies, on the other hand, were always distressed - either by the Mughal-Maratha conflict in the Deccan/Western India, or by the intense rivalry between their respective countries - back in Europe. Hence, they could have ill afforded to ignore the demands of the Marathas whose authority in the Deccan could not be disregarded. Sambhaji capitalised on the situation and always tried to extract whatever supplies he needed from them. For example, in the year 1687, while the Mughal-Maratha struggle was in full swing in the lower Deccan region, and a possible Mughal success was on cards, in anticipation of the Mughal success and possible inimical relations with the Marathas, the French Governor, Francis Martin, started fortifying the French factory. At the same time, the French tried to cultivate friendship with the Mughals. The Marathas, however, in 1688, issued an order to stop further work of fortification. The French, though, were later permitted to fortify the said factory on payment of 5000 Chakras (1 Chakra = Re. 1 and P. 75 only) subject to reservation by the Marathas to decide the height of the bastion.[4]

For successful and unhindered operation of the Maratha fleet, Sambhaji also made every effort to keep the waters adjacent to the Maratha coast free from any influence of hostile operators. Despite all his pre-occupations on land, he did not allow complacency to set in, particularly in the matters of coastal defence. He is said to have taken enough care not to leave the mouths of the rivers, leading to the Maratha hinterland, unguarded. The garrison strength and provisioning of the various coastal and island fortresses of strategic importance were properly monitored. In fact, there are references that Sambhaji also tried to acquire places strategically suitable the coastal defences of the *Swarajya*, and even fought wars with those who opposed him in doing so. His keenness to have a suitable landing site at Chaul and his attempt to capture and fortify the island of Elephanta, near Bombay, could be seen in such background. In fact, such attempts were also actually undertaken to counter the *Siddi* threat in the Konkan waters.

Another significant aspect of Sambhaji's naval policy was that, like Shivaji, he too, did not enter into unnecessary conflicts with the Europeans on the west coast. On the contrary, he tried to be in constant correspondence with the English and the Portuguese to ensure that the Maratha fleet operated without any obstacles from their side. We have already referred to one such correspondence between the Maratha and the Portuguese in which the former had sought permission of the later to allow free passage of his vessels. As regards the English, their experiences of naval conflicts with Shivaji could not bring them any thing but a loss in commerce - which a commercial 'Trading Company' like the EAST INDIA COMPANY could hardly justify. After the Khanderi-Underi episode (of 1678-79) involving the Marathas, the *Siddi* and the EAST INDIA COMPANY, the English had worked hard for peace and had succeeded in signing a peace pact with the Marathas. It was, therefore, expected from them that they would go-ahead with the recently concluded peace treaty, they had signed with Shivaji in Jan 1680,[5] which mostly dealt with naval provisions concerning the Marathas, *Siddi* and the English. The English factors, therefore, tried to get in touch with the Maratha authorities on the pretext of payment of '*Bakshish*' to Sambhaji immediately after his accession.[6] This, undoubtedly, would have been the most opportune moment to re-affirm their sincere desire to maintain cordial relations with the new Maratha ruler. This does not mean, however, that sources of disagreement (of any nature) between them were eliminated altogether. On the contrary, we find that on many occasions the Marathas had entered into military conflict (including naval actions) with the English, French or the Portuguese. It should be understood that such conflicts were mostly of the nature of pressure tactics (as they had been in the past) and, many a times, arose because of the involvement of a third party in between. The normal business and transactions continued while the diplomatic channels were explored. Let us now assess the nature of naval problems faced by Sambhaji during his short tenure of nearly a decade, and his response to them.

(A) SAMBHAJI, MUGHALS AND THE *SIDDI*: STRUGGLE FOR UNDERI AND JANJIRA -

In the previous chapter we have discussed about the occupation and fortification of Khanderi and Underi by Shivaji and the *Siddi* respectively. We have also examined the role played by the English factors at Bombay during the struggle for Khanderi-Underi. Though Shivaji was not comfortable with the *Siddi* occupying and fortifying Underi, he could do little to lay his hands upon that. The *Siddi* got the opportunity to further strengthen the defences of Underi in view of the death of Shivaji. The eagerness to wrest Underi from the *Siddi* was very much alive when Sambhaji came to power. Sambhaji reviewed the situation and without wasting time, commenced a naval operation to capture Underi. The English Factory Records make a mention of a 'hot bout' at Underi between the *Siddi* and Sambhaji. Sambhaji's attempt on Underi seems to have been made early in the month of August, 1680. It is mentioned that, "...in a dark night Sambhaji Raja's men landed there (at Underi) - about 200 of them, got into the work undiscovered; but giving the alarm too soon, for want of daylight and a thorough knowledge of the place, were beaten... About 80 of the Maratha lives were lost in this process..."[7] This letter does not tell us about the number of vessels put to use by the Marathas; neither does it reveal the identity of the Commander of the Maratha naval force for the said operation. However, another letter, dated 4th of Nov 1680, gives us an idea of the naval forces Sambhaji had readied for (yet another) action against the *Siddi*. The letter reads, "We have certain news of the Raja's Armada, consisting of 50 sails of Ghurabs and Galvats, all fitted at Rajapur, and have on board them between 4000-5000 men under the command of Daulat Khan, and that, very suddenly they will be coming to the northward. What their intentions are, we cannot learn...we shall be very vigilant and endeavour to prevent any surprise that they may attempt on us."[8]

It had been the policy of the English to accommodate the *Siddi* (for wintering of his fleet) at Bombay since long. The *Siddi*, thus, had become a cause of dispute between the Marathas and the English on the Konkan coast. The above policy of the English (particularly at Surat) towards the *Siddi* was observed more in letter and spirit ever since the *Siddi* was conferred with the title of Mughal Admiral by Aurangzeb. Since Bombay was largely dependent on the Marathas for the supply of food grains, oil, ghee, firewood, timber etc., its endeavour was, therefore, to try and keep their dealings with the *Siddi* concealed from the Marathas. In fact, it was quite difficult, thus, for Bombay to keep both, the Marathas as well as the *Siddi*, contented.

Early in 1682, the Mughals had initiated their military campaign against the Marathas. Kalyan-Bhiwandi was attacked by one of the Mughal contingents. The *Jedhe Shakawali* records that the Mughal *Subedar* Hasan Ali Khan had burnt down the town of Kalyan-Bhiwandi in the month of Magha (probably the month of January, 1682) and returned. It is interesting to find that, during this campaign, the British secretly supplied ammunitions to the Mughal commander Hasan Ali Khan.[9] The Mughal military campaign against Sambhaji was to continue – which meant unsettled conditions and further loss of trade and commerce to the British. It must be kept in mind that the EAST INDIA COMPANY was primarily a trading body, with the prime objective of making huge profits through trade and commerce. A British letter suggests that the Surat factors, though, thought that it was not was not practical to displease the *Siddi* while the Mughal forces were advancing in the Deccan, they had advised Bombay to help the Marathas (against the *Siddi*) in a secret manner.[10] At the same time Bombay, which had prevented the *Siddi* from entering Bombay harbour in the month of April 1682, were pressurised by the Surat authorities, early in the month of May, to grant the *Siddi* the permission to shelter in Bombay harbour on the pretext that their (*Siddi*'s) presence will be a help against the threat of Sambhaji on Bombay.[11]

The *Siddi* exploited the situation to the best. He was definitely looking for an opportunity of settling scores with the Marathas, their arch rivals on the Konkan coast. The *Siddi* depredations in the Maratha coastal areas are well recorded in the contemporary documents. The *Siddi*'s *modus-operandi* was to use Underi as the base for carrying out his pillaging activities in the area around Bombay. Moreover, he had the additional advantage of using Bombay too for his wicked activities. Many a times, using the Bombay harbour as a base, the *Siddi* used to foray from there and/or made good his escape there. This could be substantiated by way of the following examples. After the naval engagement between the Marathas and the *Siddi* at Underi early in August 1680, the *Siddi* had gone to Bombay with the (chopped-off) heads of about 80 Maratha sailors with the intention of displaying them there. However, the Deputy Governor of Bombay did not allow him to do so.[12] Elsewhere, in 1681, the *Siddi* had reportedly caught 02 of Sambhaji's Galvats that were going to Bombay. The Maratha *Subedar* of Pen demanded, from the factors at Bombay, the return of Galvats along with the crew threatening them that otherwise he would refer the matter to Sambhaji. The Galvats and the crew were duly returned.[13] The intervention of the English, thus, sometimes got the desired results.

On the other hand, despite his preoccupations, Sambhaji could not afford to ignore the *Siddi* depredations for long. He had resolved to tackle the *Siddi* nuisance, particularly on water, on priority. He had been gearing up resources to strengthen the naval defenses of the *Swarajya* to meet the *Siddi* challenge. In this endeavour, Sambhaji could comprehend the strategic and tactical importance of naval bases and forts during naval contests. Hence, he tried to ensure that the Maratha navy should not suffer for want of such foundations. Apparently to coerce the Portuguese to cede a strip of land at Chaul, suitable for a base, Sambhaji pointed towards the fact that similar permission was granted by them (the Portuguese) to the *Siddi* in the recent past. However, the Portuguese Governor refused to oblige the request very politely intimating him that permission from the Viceroy of Goa would have to be obtained for the same.[14] Sambhaji also comprehended that it was convenient to transport provisions from Thane to Kalyan by boats and thus maintain the logistics through an alternative route/channel. This was a pre-requisite for the successful maneuver of any troop in that region. Hence, in view of the advancing Mughal army to Kalyan-Bhiwandi, Sambhaji decided to erect a fortification at Parsik. Such a fort was to check effectively the movement of the Mughal fleet or that of any other enemy through that route. But his efforts were frustrated as the Portuguese (understanding the strategic implications), acted swiftly, took possession of the place and built their own fort there.[15] The genuineness of Sambhaji could be further understood in the light of the occupation and simultaneous fortification of an island near Elephanta long before he could practically undertake the siege of Janjira.[16] This was done, apparently, to counter the English at Bombay who were maintaining a sympathetic and friendly policy towards the *Siddi*. As such, the Maratha island fort of Khanderi worked as a major deterrent against any possible misdemeanour of the English through the sea. Under such circumstances, the count of yet another fortified island near Bombay would have added strategic dimensions to the Maratha pressure on the English and might have appreciably altered the *Siddi*-British relations on the west coast.

Sambhaji made yet another attempt to capture Underi before he set out to obtain the invincible Janjira fort from the *Siddi*. The occupation of Underi, no doubt, would have given the Martha navy, peace of mind as it was dangerously close to their own stronghold of Khanderi. There would have been no cause of worry of any marine attack on Khanderi originating from Underi if it was brought under Maratha flag. This would have allowed the Maratha to concentrate their naval mission on Janjira. To achieve this objective, therefore, Sambhaji made another 'purposefully considered' effort in 1681. He is said to have stationed 22 Galvats and a sizeable crew along with 4000 men (who were requisitioned from Raigarh, perhaps with the payment of six month salary in advance), all alert, at river Nagotahna. It is also believed that, in addition to this incentive, every member of the crew was promised a reward of two seers of gold each, after the accomplishment of task.[17] Orme writes that after waiting for a month for fair weather, the Maratha vessels sailed over to Underi and made an assault on it (probably on 18th July, 1681). As per the English records, after a fight for almost four hours, the Marathas were beaten off comprehensively. In this battle, the Marathas casualty was quite high and many of them were taken prisoners too.[18] The failure of this venture, however, could not deter Sambhaji. The *Siddi*, on the other hand, elated with this success, sailed out of Bombay (where his fleet had been wintering) and once again wrecked havoc on the coastal possessions. The adjoining coast of Korlai was looted, inhabitants were captured and a ransom of Rs. 18,000/- was collected form their relatives.[19] The *Siddi* did not end the hostilities there, and continued to create nuisance for both the Marathas as well as the English. The Bombay factors when pressed the *Siddi* to refrain from depredations on the

Korlai, or even the hostilities within the harbour (the *Siddi*'s men had virtually occupied Mazagaon during their stay at Bombay), the *Siddi* denied that he had received any such orders at Surat (i.e., the Mughal governor of Surat), and cruised daily, within and without, on all vessels trading to any part of Sambhaji's country, and even detained one belonging to Bombay, though it possessed the pass purchased from the *Siddi*.[20] The 'arm-twisting' tactics of the *Siddi* worked against Bombay which had to (reluctantly) allow the *Siddi* to stay in Bombay though on the condition that the *Siddi would refrain from looting or plundering* the Maratha coast.[21] The *Siddi*, however, did not honour his words, and on the 7th of December, he sent all his Galvats to Korlai where his men burnt the town of Apte. A few days later, the whole fleet went down to Chaul and, 'passing the Portuguese fort at the mouth of the river without offence, ravaged a large tract of the adjacent country, but were not able to assault the town of upper Chaul, belonging to Sambhaji...'[22] This was the most recent provocation to Sambhaji which came from the *Siddi*. All the more Sambhaji was getting more resolute in the pursuit of the one of the most longing objectives of the Maratha *Swarajya*, namely, the reduction of the Janjira fort and the annihilation of the *Siddi*. But he needed to be more cautious and tactically sound in military terminology.

Sambhaji wanted to ensure that the Portuguese and the English (especially at Bombay) were distanced from the *Siddi* in such a manner that the *Siddi* would find it difficult to get shelter or provisions or any other kind of material help from them. Only under such an eventuality that any military campaign of the Marathas directed against the *Siddi* could be meaningfully carried out. The English (at Bombay) being nearer to his territory than the Portuguese, Sambhaji had to put pressure on them so as to bring them to compliance in this matter.

For example, the English at Bombay were strictly conveyed that he (Sambhaji) would have no respect for, or take any notice of the English till the *Siddi* were turned out (of Bombay); and that, if they continued to stay in that port, Sambhaji would be very severe and demand the return of the amount that had already been paid as *Bakhshish*.[23] As a result, the English at Bombay and Rajapur lived under constant fear of being attacked by Sambhaji's vessels which had been recently fitted at Rajapur.[24] Negotiations with Bombay, at the same, time were carried out by one of the most able and shrewd

Maratha diplomats - Awaji Pandit, regarding the *Siddi*. Awaji Pandit was given secret instructions to personally watch the *Siddi* activities there. The letter read, "Sambhaji did not want to break the amicable relations between them in spite of their policy of giving shelter to the *Siddi*, and other activities against the alliance. If they do not stop the menace of the *Siddi* henceforth, against which he had to maintain an army of 10 thousand unnecessarily, he would, without hesitation, wage war against Bombay."[25] The Maratha deputation brought the desired result and consequently the English sent a delegation in the form of Robert Thorvin and Capt. Gary, on 20th Dec 1680 to hold talks with the *Siddi*. These two apparently warned the *Siddi* to stop plundering and devastating the Maratha coasts or else the English would be compelled to treat the *Siddi* as an enemy. They also asked him to give an assurance in writing that he will not be a menace to Korlai, Nagothana, Pen, Apte, etc., or to leave Bombay along with his fleet.[26] This talk had some effect on the *Siddi* at Bombay. Moreover, the English at Surat also communicated to Bombay that no Englishmen should serve under *Siddi* and to fine anyone who disobeyed this command.[27] Sambhaji used other coercive methods too to force the English to comply. For example, Sambhaji frequently pressurised them either by way of stopping the food and fuel supply to them from the adjoining Maratha territory, or by capturing their small vessels as prizes for negotiations. But Sambhaji was equally sensible to understand and appreciate that the tactics of putting pressure on the English in order to contain the *Siddi* mischief would not work actually. Moreover, there was also the risk of alienating the English, which he would have never wanted in view of the Mughal advance to the Deccan.

On the other hand, Sambhaji's relations with the Portuguese were also not very conducive on account of the Chaul and Anjadiv episode. He understood that the Portuguese were in a comparatively more secure position in the Konkan waters as compared to the English. Hence, he ultimately decided to go ahead against the *Siddi* and strike at his stronghold of Janjira through a direct military action. As a pre-requisite - though, he tried to ensure that the Europeans were kept aloof of it by way of his military, strategic or even diplomatic activities against them. If the Maratha chronicles are to be believed in this respect, it comes to the fore that Sambhaji was very much physically presents and directing the siege operations against the island fort. The chronicles rather give an interesting narrative of the episode of the siege of Janjira by Sambhaji. It is alleged that all means were applied to bring the island fortress of Janjira under control. To start with, one Khandoji Pharjand had joined the services of the *Siddi* with the intention of sabotage inside the fort. He had planned to burn the ammunition dumps in the fort as a preemptive measure before the actual Maratha attack. However, the *Siddi* got a scent of this conspiracy. He imprisoned and executed the said Maratha, and caused his accomplice to be drowned. Sambhaji, on the other hand, even after receiving the news of this disaster, stuck to his plan of action on the fort.[28]

The reduction of Janjira was possible, but it required a well conceived naval action, which should include actual landing too. Sambhaji's plan was tactically sound. He chose to go ahead with a two pronged attack on Janjira – one from the sea side and the other - the complementary one - from the land side. On the land, the town of Danda-Rajpuri was besieged with 20,000 Maratha men along with a vast train of cannon, requisitioned from Raigad. Sambhaji was also accompanied by the fugitive Mughal prince Akbar in this mission.[29] The military expedition theoretically commenced by the end of Dec, 1681. The siege of Danda-Rajpuri was pressed with such a determination and vigour that the English factors at Bombay also report about the concentration of the Maratha forces in the following manner, "... He (Sambhaji) has got such army of men with him that has made all provisions extraordinary dear..."[30]

The town of Danda-Rajpuri was subjected to continuous artillery bombardments for at least a fortnight. *Siddi* Khairiat, the Commander of the fort of Danda-Rajapuri, could do little against the determined Maratha action. As a result, the fortifications were virtually reduced to rubbles and the custodians of the fort were obliged to take shelter under a small rocky hill. On the other hand, the Maratha fleet had also accumulated in a considerable number to lay siege of the island fort of Janjira. However, it seems that the *Siddi* had taken preventive counter-measures to neutralize the threat of the Maratha attack on the sea. As a result, the Maratha vessels could not reach anywhere near the landing site of Janjira. But, this did not deter the Maratha navy to open artillery fire on the fort itself. It appears that the Maratha artillery on the coast of Danda-Rajpuri was positioned in such a manner that Janjira fort could also be brought within the range of the Maratha fire. The Persian (Mughal) Source *Akhbarat* throw some light on this event. In one of the letters it is mentioned that the Mughal *Subedar Siddi* Yakut Khan (who was present at Danda-Rajpuri) had reported that 'Sambhaji had aimed his guns against Janjira fort, and that he had fought with the *Killedar*, fired the guns and the balls weighing 3.25 seers each fell continuously in the fort.[31]

Though the castle of Danda-Rajpuri was demolished, yet the *Siddi* could not be totally crushed till the time Janjira escaped capture. Janjira provided a safe refuge to the *Siddi* leadership. With the nearby coast and bays guarded by the *Siddi* navy, the *Siddi* leaders could easily manage to slip, via sea, into the safety of the Janjira fort, whenever hard-pressed from the 'land based powers'. The recent history of the *Siddi* suggested that from the base of Janjira, they could carry on depredations on the opposite coast, till the time they get a firm-footing on the coast itself. In fact the invincibility of Janjira was more a symbol of the spirit of *Siddi* resistance. Hence, for Sambhaji, to put an end to the *Siddi* nuisance, it was necessary to either capture physically - the fort of Janjira, or to destroy it along with the *Siddi* fleet. But, the presence of the *Siddi* fleet in the coastal waters was too overwhelming to have allowed the Maratha King to accomplish his job without risking too much. Sambhaji was desperate; hence he approached the Portuguese at Chaul and tried to extract forcible collaboration from them in landing his men to Janjira. To put extra pressure on them he also issued the warning that in case of non-compliance, Chaul would be destroyed and that they would not be entitled for any compensation in such an eventuality.[32] The Portuguese, however, seems to have avoided any altercation and remained non-committal on this issue. On the other hand the English at Bombay had already applied to Surat for the permission to strengthen the fortifications at Bombay as they anticipated a possible Maratha attack in view of *Siddi* Kasim's presence there along with his fleet.[33] With no help/cooperation coming from any quarters, the situation was apparently un-conducive for the Marathas. However, since he had already committed a large number of his troops and fleet for the Janjira expedition, he did not want to revert back from the course of action he had opted for. It was more a question of prestige for him. Yet, he reviewed the situation, and came up with an innovative idea of dealing with it. Since it was not possible to transport and subsequently land the Maratha troops to Janjira through sea, a distance of just half a mile or so (the channel leading to the island fortress roughly measured 800 x 30 yards) from the shore, he sought to raise a bridge to the island with the inventive idea of filling the channel with stones, timber and bags of cotton.[34] Such an ambitious project required, in addition to time, phenomenal efforts and resources. Sambhaji, undaunted, went ahead to realize his dream, but it is said that this plan could not be successfully executed mostly because of the rough sea.[35]

Before Sambhaji could come up with any alternative plan to pursue his military and naval operations against Janjira in a more profitable manner, he received intelligence about the advance of the Mughal forces in the vicinity of Maratha territory.[36] It was a matter of grave concern on two accounts. One, the rebellious (and fugitive) Mughal prince Akbar was extended hospitality by the Marathas; secondly, in view of the commitment of a large body of the Maratha troops to Janjira, the Maratha defenses were weak and exposed to the enemy from the landward side. At the same time, the Mughals, with the aim of the destruction of the Deccan principalities, were moving ahead in huge volumes. Sambhaji, therefore, could not risk the fate of the Maratha *Swarajya* for Janjira. At the same time, he was shrewd enough not to entirely relieve Janjira of the Maratha pressure. He arranged for the continuation of the siege of Janjira with a considerable number of troops and some of his most able commanders like Mai Naik, Govindrao Kate, Daulat Khan, Kavaji Mohammad, Govindji Kanho, Govindji Jadhav, Santaji Pavla and 400 resolute soldiers under the command of Dadaji Prabhu etc. In this way Sambhaji had to withdraw himself from the Janjira expedition which he had personally supervised and directed for some time. After the departure of Sambhaji, the remaining Maratha contingent continued to make attempts to demolish, get near and land at Janjira but fell short of mark and lost many a determined Maratha soldiers in this process. With the advent of monsoon it was no longer viable for the Marathas to continue at the sea hence the expedition was apparently called off during the peak of monsoon.[37] From the English records, it seems that Sambhaji's fleet at Khanderi were instructed to plunder and attack every vessels (particularly those of the Siddi which were expected to arrive at Bombay for the annual wintering of their fleet) entering the port of Bombay.[38] The Maratha fleet, accordingly inflicted damages even to the English Company's vessels too, and continued to do so for a considerable period.[39] This highlights the strategic (as well as nuisance) value of Khanderi (as a naval base) with respect to Bombay.

After Sambhaji departed from Danda-Rajpuri, he applied himself to ensure the safety of his frontiers from the Mughal attack. He was almost certain of the chance of a Mughal action from land as well as from the sea as he had dared the Mughal admiral in his stronghold. Hence, he worked in advance to minimize the impact of such a possibility. He did not want the Mughals to take advantage of the British cooperation in any manner. Hence, in order to defuse the British role in case of a Mughal offensive on the Maratha territory, he opened up the channel of negotiations with Bombay. A Maratha delegation led by the Chief-Justice of the *Swarajya*, Prahlad Niraji, was sent with a proposal to have some sort of 'dual alliance' between the English and the Marathas, directed against the Mughals. In other words, it was purely an attempt to keep the British away from the Mughals/*Siddi* so that they could not offer any voluntary help to them. At the same time he is said to have come closer to the Arabs for the purpose of a naval alliance directed against the combined enemies of the Marathas and the Arabs.[40] The English at Bombay, however, appeared unperturbed and did not look very keen about the Maratha proposal for dual alliance. One of the reasons of their indifference towards the Marathas might have been the total subordination of Bombay to Surat in policy matters at that time. The Maratha delegation led by Prahlad Niraji, therefore, was kept guessing about the reply of the English till Dec 1682. By that time a strong Mughal fleet consisting of more than a hundred *Galvats* had already made their way to Bombay with succor for those engaged against the Marathas. This imperial fleet along with the vessels commanded by the *Siddi* created more problems not only for Sambhaji, but for the English too. It is reported that the return journey of the Maratha delegation, accompanied by one Henry Smith was made precarious by the *Siddi* as all the passage leading to the sea (from Bombay) was blocked by the *Siddi* vessels. This incident makes up yet another example of the susceptible position of Bombay.

The Janjira expedition of having failed, Sambhaji had to look for other means and ways to assault the *Siddi* strongholds. Any immediate undertaking on Janjira fort was ruled out owing to obvious limitations in terms of naval resources. However, the ruin of Underi was still a viable option which Sambhaji wanted to put into effect. We have already noted the manner in which desperate attempts made by Sambhaji to capture Underi in the years 1680 and 1681 respectively. Even before the commencement of the

Janjira campaign, Sambhaji had tried to 'neutralize' the potential threats from Underi. It is said that the Maratha navy, with an augmented strength (which consisted of 85 Galvats with 5000 crew on board), under the command of *Siddi* Misri, was strategically deployed in the waters near the upper Konkan. A simultaneous naval attack was to be carried out on the *Siddi* vessels at Underi, Chaul and Bombay. A similar naval force at Thal was also kept ready with the intent to capture Underi at night. Some of the naval commanders who participated in the siege of Bombay/Underi were - Daulat Khan, Mai Nayak Bhandari, Kavji Mahmud and Govind Kanho etc.[41] Yet, the entire exercise could not fetch anything significant in view of a strong counter-offensive by the *Siddi*, who had resorted to heavy artillery firing from Underi.[42] Subsequent to the lifting of the siege of Janjira, the *Siddi* became free to pursue his hostilities against the Maratha coastal areas. This was being done more vocally now as the Marathas were facing the Mughal onslaught on the other side. In the month of October, there was yet another naval engagement between the Marathas and the *Siddi* near Bombay. The English records informs us that this naval engagement proved disastrous for the Marathas as they lost one of their valuable commanders *Siddi* Misri along with some vessels and a few men.[43]

The Maratha-*Siddi* tussle was renewed when Richard Keigwin assumed the command of the island of Bombay. This was the time when Bombay had openly refused any kind of help to the *Siddi*. Keigwin, at the same time, had tried to maintain a friendly relation with the Marathas during his short rule over Bombay. This welcome change in the attitude of English administrators at Bombay encouraged the Marathas to try their luck against the *Siddi* once more. It is reported that late in the year 1685, a person, by the name Balaji, son of Vaidya Pilaji Knhavi, a resident of Chaul, tried to capture Underi on behalf of Sambhaji. But, in this process, he, along with a number of people, was killed. The *Siddi* retaliated by attacking Chaul.[44] The subsequent gains of the *Siddi* at Chaul have been reported in the English Records. It is interesting to note that the English at Bombay contemplated that the *Siddi*, in retaliation to the repeated Maratha designs on Underi and Khanderi, would try to capture the Maratha naval forts of Khanderi, Kulaba and Padmadurg etc. The English records mention that the *Siddi* had besieged a small fort called *Cullane* at the mouth of the river Nagaon, which, if captured, Khanderi would be in the danger of falling in his hands.[45] Their apprehension was not totally speculative.

After devastating Chaul, the *Siddi* had almost advanced up to Pen and had demanded some guns from Bombay. The Maratha docks at Kalyan-Bhiwandi could also have been the possible target of the *Siddi* adventure. However, in absence of any definite information it is difficult to confirm the actual intention of the *Siddi* action. The advance of the *Siddi* vessels up to Pen, on the other hand, was sufficient basis to create nervousness in the English camp at Bombay about the safety of Bombay itself. Hence, Bombay recommended Surat to send an envoy to Sambhaji at once with a request to entrust the responsibility of the defense of Khanderi temporarily to them. The approval of the Maratha King would also have ensured Bombay additional security, as the island fort of Khanderi stood almost at the entrance to the Bombay harbour.[46] The English sources are silent on the outcome of this mission. However, it seems that Sambhaji could not have consented to this proposal of the English. The Marathi chronicles verify that the forts of Padmadurg, Kulaba and Khanderi continued to be firmly held by the Marathas.[47]

On the other hand, the *Siddi*, too, could not vigorously push forward his expedition, and was obliged to raise it very soon in order to meet the superior strategic requirements of the Mughals campaign against Sambhaji. The *Siddi* was directed to rush to Jaitapur in pursuit of the rebel Mughal prince Akbar, who was enjoying the hospitality of Sambhaji.[48] But the *Siddi* was unable to complete this task as disaster struck him in course of his exploit. At Jaitapur, he had to face a retaliatory action from the Marathas who not only killed 400 of his men, but also succeeded in capturing four of his Galvats. In this melee, it is further reported that *Siddi* Kasim himself escaped narrowly with four wounds.[49]

At that time Sambhaji was totally engrossed in a war of survival against the Mughals. The writing was very clear on the wall. Sambhaji needed to concentrate and reorganize his energy and resources against the Mughals if he wanted to save the Maratha *Swarajya* from almost certain destruction. However, he could not afford to ignore the threats posed by the *Siddi* from the sea-frontage either. Such a situation needed judicious application of the mental faculty so that the available resources could be utilized in a more tactical manner. Fortunately, the English initiative of friendship (by the new governor of Bombay - Richard Keigwin) at that point of time, proved to be a boon in disguise for the sinking fortunes of the Maratha *Swarajya*. Moreover, the English were apparently not keeping good terms with the Portuguese too. Under such conditions Bombay sent George Weldon and Robert Graham as their envoy to Raigad for negotiations with Sambhaji. Sambhaji pounced upon the opportunity he had been waiting for quite a long time. The result was a defensive Anglo-Maratha alliance with the agreement of providing protection to the Maratha territory (particularly the coastal areas from the *Siddi* depredations) by the English in return for food and other necessary supply from the Maratha side. The above-mentioned Anglo-Maratha understanding, thus, appears to be probably the last meaningful attempt of Sambhaji to counter the *Siddi* challenge. It should not be inferred, however, that the requisite strength of the Maratha navy was not maintained because of the compulsions of the Mughal pressure from land. To tackle the critical situation, Sambhaji seems to have even appointed the deserters from the *Siddi* navy probably in order to enhance the efficiency of his navy. Reportedly, one the highest ranked naval officer of the Maratha fleet during Sambhaji's reign (later on) was a *Siddi* by the name of *Siddi* Misri.[50] The Maratha navy indeed continued to perform its basic job of securing the sea frontiers of the *Swarajya*, however, references of intense naval clashes during the concluding years of Sambhaji's reign does not figure in the contemporary literature.

(B) SAMBHAJI AND THE ENGLISH -

The intensity of understanding between the Marathas and the English were not adequate throughout the Sambhaji's reign. There was no reason not to foster and consolidate the amicable relations cemented between the two sides in the concluding year of Shivaji's reign. However, the pressing politico-military compulsions on both the sides kept them pre-occupied and the ground gained in the bilateral relations was soon allowed to slip out of their hands. Sambhaji had inherited an energetic nation which was facing a serious threat of a forceful Mughal invasion on a daily basis. On the other hand, the main dilemma the English were facing in the decades of 1670 and 1680 was to reconcile with the mighty Mughals, the rulers of India, on the one hand, and the nascent spirit of the Maratha nation created by the genius of Shivaji, on the other. The English were put into such an awkward situation, especially on the west coast of India that they had to exercise the option of choosing either the Maratha or the Mughals in the struggle of power between the two. If it was difficult for the English to maintain a neutral position, it was almost impossible for them to keep both of them in good taste. This does not mean, however, that initiatives such as the exchange of emissaries etc. were not taken by these parties. We come across references of such nature and also correspondences regarding removal/redressal of grievances by both the parties. In fact, there was a brief period when the English exhibited a keen desire to patch up with the Marathas and cement the bond of friendship based on mutual respect. This had happened at the time when Richard Keigwin seized power at Bombay. This was, probably, the smoothest period of the bilateral relations between the Marathas and the English. However, this spell was short lived. In reality, both the sides lived each day as per its merit and allowed their mutual relations to be dictated by a variety of circumstances. Let us have an overview of the relations between the Marathas and English when Sambhaji came to power.

As noted earlier, the first overture was made by the English who wanted to make use of the occasion of the accession of Sambhaji to the Maratha throne. The English factors made a request for the payment of *Baksheesh*, a customary tradition, but it could not work out in view of Sambhaji's preoccupation in other matters. The English, however, pursued the matter keeping in mind their larger interests and sent their envoy to Raigad to secure orders for the *Bakhshish* as Sambhaji had gone to Raigad on 18th June, 1680.[51] Sambhaji, however, was apparently annoyed with the English on the issue of their offering shelter, provisions and ammunitions to the *Siddi* at Bombay. Hence, he minced no words to openly express his anguish before the English emissary at Raigad.[52] The English at Bombay were fully aware of the crux of the problem. Hence, they tried to take corrective measures in order to show their sincerity towards having a harmonious relation with Sambhaji. Since the management of Bombay was guided by the Company's administrators at Surat, Bombay represented to Surat that the permission to the *Siddi* to shelter his fleet at Bombay was the main reason of the Maratha reluctance to come to amicable terms with the English at Bombay. Furthermore, in a goodwill gesture towards the Marathas, the Deputy Governor of Bombay flatly refused to entertain the *Siddi* when the latter wanted to use Bombay harbour in course of the Maratha-*Siddi* conflict in 1680. The Deputy Governor's action could be justified in the light of the fact that it was not the case of annual wintering of the *Siddi* fleet.[53]

On the other hand, Sambhaji, in order to en-cash the achievements of Shivaji and project the vigour and vitality of the Maratha state, decide to play with the psychology of the English, who were, after all *foreigners*. He stepped up his naval preparations and apparently mobilized them in the areas around the British coastal possessions. The ploy of Sambhaji seems to have worked indeed. The English Factory Records testify with awe and apprehension the Maratha naval strength in terms of equipped vessels and manpower committed to it.[54] The diplomatic channels were also intelligently exercised by Sambhaji.[55] The letter, referring to the previous treaty of 1680, communicated that 'Sambhaji did not want to break the amicable relations between them in spite of their policy of giving shelter *and other facilities* to the *Siddi.*' However, it also mentioned specifically that he (Sambhaji) would, without hesitation, wage war against Bombay if they do not stop the menace of the *Siddi* henceforth, to counter whom he had to maintain an army of 10 thousand unnecessarily.'[56]

The Maratha deputation fetched the desired result. The English immediately deputed Robert Thorvin and Capt. Gary, on 20th Dec 1680 to hold talks with the *Siddi*. The *Siddi* was apparently warned to desist from plundering and devastating the Maratha coasts or else the English would be compelled to treat him as an enemy. The *Siddi* was further asked to give an assurance in writing that he will not be a menace to the Maratha territory adjoining Korlai, Nagothana, Pen, Apte, etc. failing which he would be compelled to leave Bombay along with his fleet.[57] What impact did it have on the *Siddi* is anyone's guess. The *Siddi* continued to indulge in plundering activities and even created troubles for Bombay. However, Surat was sensitized to some extent. As a result, in a letter dated 29th Aug 1681, Surat instructed Bombay to take suitable steps against the *Siddi*, and also to strictly ensure that no Englishmen served under the *Siddi*.

It is interesting to note that Bombay desperately wanted the *Siddi* issue to be resolved before it was too late for them to have the Maratha sympathies. In fact, the vulnerability of Bombay Island is amplified in one of the English correspondences of that time.[58] Bombay, which was already threatened because of the Maratha island fortress of Khanderi, was further endangered by Sambhaji's attempt to fortify the Elephanta Island and another 'rocky island' near Bombay. Kamal Gokhale identifies this island as '*Kulaba Kot*'.[59] Sambhaji's attempt to bring those off-shore rocks under control could be seen as a purely tactical exercise to maintain pressure on the English in terms of 'deterrence' capability of the Marathas with respect to Bombay. This exercise brought the desired result anyway, because Bombay, in response, sought permission from Surat to further strengthen its fortifications. It was argued that this was necessary 'in case the *Siddi* was allowed to winter at Bombay.' On 19th Jan 1682, Bombay wrote, "We will be able to have amity and friendship with Sambhaji only if the *Siddi* do not stay in Bombay."[60] This was the time when Sambhaji had laid siege on Janjira. It should be remembered that Bombay had to bear the brunt of the frustration of either side because of the inconclusive struggle between the Marathas and the *Siddi*. Bombay factors alleged that *as a result of the Maratha-Siddi conflict*, they had 'suffered losses to the tune of Rs. 4560/- within a period of 8 months...'[61] The amount stated above does not seem to be inflated, because for the *Siddi*, it was his nature, and possibly the means of survival, to loot and plunder anywhere he liked. Whereas, the Marathas often suspected the English and attributed the cause of their failure against the *Siddi* to the British '*sympathy and clandestine support*', in addition to their authorization to the *Siddi* to winter his fleet in the Bombay harbour. Hence, as reprisal, Bombay was more likely to be punished by the Marathas by way of capture of their small boats, and strangulation of the supply of the essentials to Bombay from the adjoining Maratha territory. It has been evidently mentioned in the Factory Records that the prices of the commodities shot up to 300% in the aftermath of Sambhaji's failure against the *Siddi*. The Portuguese seems to have added to the miseries of Bombay by preventing the export of food grains from their territory too.[62] Surat, on the other hand, had other 'compulsions and commitments'. The ramifications of the *Siddi*-Maratha conflict on Bombay could not make any impact on the Company's administrators at Surat. Bombay was obliged to help the *Siddi* by way of allowing the *Siddi* men to keep their families and goods at Bombay so that they could be protected from the Maratha reprisal.

In the meanwhile, the first phase of Mughal expedition against Sambhaji was already initiated by Aurangzeb. The Marathas, in return, were trying to create as many inconveniences for the Mughal troops in the Deccan as possible. The Mughal troops were harassed and their supply lines were snapped. In order to maintain a continuous pressure on Sambhaji, the Mughals therefore asked the Portuguese too, to cooperate in the region between Bombay to Thane.[63] Sambhaji could very well calculate the consequences of such an eventuality. Hence, in order to prevent the English from committing anything of that sort to the Mughals, he dispatched his emissary to the English and proposed a friendly alliance between the English and the Marathas.[64] Prahlad Niraji went to Bombay with necessary directions. At the same time Surat also issued instructions to Bombay to secure a *firman* for trade in the ports in Chandi and the transfer of the Maratha *Subedar* at Karwar, who troubled them.[65] But, before anything could materialize between these two, a sizeable Mughal fleet having 110 Galvats and about 12 thousand crew made its way to Bombay with necessary supply and provisions for the Mughal forces pitched against the Marathas in the Deccan. Sambhaji could not tolerate that his efforts to bring the English to his side in his fight against the Mughals had gone waste. As a result, the English shipping was, once again, targeted by the Maratha navy as a retaliatory measure. We have the reference of one English ship, by the name 'President', being engaged and attacked by the Maratha vessels early in January 1683. The English records also allege that the Maratha vessels were aided by the Arab fleet in the attack on 'President'. The English casualty was stated as 11 dead and 35 wounded whereas some Maratha galvats were also reportedly sunk in the English counter-offensive.[66]

In the meanwhile, Sambhaji had also stepped-up hostilities against the Portuguese, who were providing assistance to the Mughal force and harming the interests of the Marathas. The Maratha attempts on Chaul, Anjadiv and Goa have been taken up for discussion in the next segment of this chapter. The English, who were keeping an eye over these activities, were quite terrified with the alarming success of Sambhaji against the Portuguese as he ravaged and succeeded in capturing Portuguese territory near Kalyan, Bassein, and Daman etc. in Dec, 1683.[67] The Bombay factors lost their nerves after the capture of Karanja[68] because it implied that the Maratha forces had not only come near Bombay, but had almost encircled the island. There was no way that Bombay could have defended itself, had the Maratha forces charged on Bombay in sufficient numbers. It was at that critical juncture in the history of Bombay that Richard Keigwin raised the banner of revolt, apparently against 'the continued negligence of the state of affairs at Bombay' by the Company authorities. Keigwin not only defended his position by holding Bombay in the name of the King of England, but also, as the Governor of

Bombay. His accession is marked by a near total departure from the earlier policy of the English towards the Marathas. He initiated negotiations with the Marathas so that peace and amity could be ensured. After all, Bombay was in grave danger of being taken away by the Marathas. The accession and rule of Keigwin thus, forms an unusual chapter of the Anglo-Maratha relations, and it would not be unwarranted to devote some pages to the characteristics of this period.

It should be kept in mind that Bombay was subordinate to the Surat factory for all practical purpose till the time the Company decided to shift their headquarters on the west coast from Surat to Bombay. Bombay faced the Marathas on daily basis mainly because of its geographical location (as the island was surrounded by Maratha territory from the land side). On the other hand, Surat sympathised with the Mughals and the *Siddi* largely because of economic and practical geopolitical considerations. The problems and priorities of Bombay and Surat were, therefore, different. Surat had the authority to take decisions in accordance with the Company's commercial interests. Bombay, in the meanwhile, was gaining prominence in the Company's affairs on the west coast ever since it was taken on lease from the Crown. Because of this, the administrators at Bombay wanted Surat to assimilate the ground realities at Bombay while formulating the policies with respect to the native rulers. The permission granted to the *Siddi* every year to winter his fleet at Bombay was the core issue which caused irritation to the Marathas as the *Siddi* was in the habit of carrying out raids on the adjacent Maratha territory using Bombay as base. Such raids were carried-out by the *Siddi* without the knowledge or approval of the Bombay authorities, which was not at all acceptable to them. The *Siddi* misdemeanours also invited retaliatory action from the Maratha side on Bombay in many ways as we have noticed in the foregoing discussion. The Bombay authorities, therefore, had kept Surat acquainted with all this. They and had also registered their protest with them on many occasions, but of no avail. Consequently, it led to mutual bickering between Bombay and the Surat authorities. The matter got to such a situation that Bombay started harbouring the thoughts that Surat authorities were neglecting the interest of Bombay. Bombay was, after all, Royal property held on lease by the Company. Hence, in order to draw the attention of the Royalty, Richard Keigwin staged a 'revolt' and held Bombay 'in the name of King'.

Bombay had undergone many changes in the decade of 1670s. At the beginning of the 1680s it was very different from the Bombay of Aungier's time. We have already noted the attempt of the English to keep the new Maratha ruler appeased after the death of Shivaji. In 1681 Sir John Child succeeded with the title of 'Captain-General and Admiral of India'. Surat was restored to the rank of a Presidency with a council of eight members, and Mansel Smith and after him Charles Ward served as Deputy Governors of Bombay from 1681 to 1683. Richard Keigwin was appointed Commandant of all the forces in the island, which numbered 505 men including 150 English. The Directors instructed Child to promote the sale of English manufactures in India, to maintain the status quo as to Henry-Kenry (Khanderi and Underi), and not to exceed the civil and military charges of Bombay beyond the maximum of 72,000 Xeraphins per year.[69]

Sambhaji, after his failure to subdue the Janjira fortress, occupied the Elephanta Island and had commenced fortification works there. This was enough to alarm the English at Bombay who anticipated a Maratha attack on Bombay after their Janjira fiasco. Charles Ward, hence, geared up his resources to meet the Maratha challenge. However, the advance of the Mughal troops to the Konkan caused distraction to Sambhaji, and instead of belligerence on Bombay, Sambhaji reportedly sent his representatives in order to have an alliance with them against the Mughals. However, no agreement could be reached on this issue.[70] Though Bombay was still facing the problems such as empty treasury, unsolicited visits of the *Siddi*, poor defenses of the island, the challenges posed by the interlopers/pirates – both European and Indian, and the troubles created by the Portuguese.[71] The salaries paid to the soldiers at Bombay were inadequate and there was a persistent problem of discipline amongst them. It was reported by the Bombay Governor Sir John child on 30th Nov 1683 that two of the Company's servants namely Bowcher and Petit had turned interlopers. The letter reads, "Petit, with 12 Englishmen, took possession of the ship '*Prosperous*', refuses to deliver it up, and threatens to set fire to it...Petit, we hear, has offered her to the King (Aurangzeb) against Sambhaji Raja, which we must see to prevent, as it may be the cause of great evils, for the Raja will be highly displeased at us."[72] The above mentioned document further supplemented that Bombay did not want to displease Sambhaji at any cost.

Keigwin understood the implications of the Maratha predominance in the area around Bombay; hence, he made attempts to court friendship with Sambhaji. It was indeed a critical moment for Bombay as the very security of Bombay was threatened because of Maratha onslaught against the Portuguese in the adjoining areas. As the Marathas captured of the island of Karanja, Bombay was sent reeling under panic. Keigwin, however, was not perturbed. To facilitate an understanding with the Maratha King Sambhaji and to settle the outstanding differences between the Marathas and the English, he rushed Capt. Henry Gary and Lt. Wilkins as envoys to Sambhaji. Apparently, an agreement was signed between them regarding mutual assurance of help.[73] A treaty was negotiated between the two sides. The proposed treaty contained 30 articles regarding Bombay and 10 regarding Karnataka. Some of them relating to trade and commercial activities are as follows: (1) That the merchants, weavers or dyers that shall have any goods belonging to the English, the *Subedar* and *Havaldar* shall not molest them, but on the contrary, shall give them all aid and assistance. (2) In buying or selling goods of merchandise from the English by the merchants or inhabitants of my dominion, if any of the inhabitants become debtors to the English, the person shall be carried before the *Subedar* or any officer who is to do justice, and order the payment of the said debt, having no respect to any person and all the English shall do the same to my people. (3) That, if any vessels or Ghurab or boats shall by wind or storm is cast away in my dominion, it shall not be confiscated. I shall observe the same rule as my father did or according to the agreements that is between me and other Christians.

Some of the articles relating to Bombay were as follows: (1) That, what difference or molestation the English have received before, shall not be called into question nor to be taken ill from them and I shall do the same. It being past and now the peace being concluded, which accordingly shall be convened and if any small matter happened we shall not take notice of it and same are agreed. (2) That, the peace being made between me and the English, if any person shall raise any matter of difference, the same shall be examined, and the peace shall be not broken thereby, but, on the contrary, shall be conserved as it is and so we both agree. (3) That, having continued war between me and the Mughal, by which reason my people enter in and destroy his country the English having factories in some parts thereof, if any of the said factories be plundered or goods taken away by the people, the *Subedar* or the *Havaldar* of the army shall restore them their goods again, and if any of their people or brokers shall be imprisoned, they shall be set at liberty without any molestation. (4) That, whereas several vessels, ghurabs, and boats belonging to me as also to the Mughals using the sea, if any of the Mughals' vessels be laden by mine and shall find any goods therein belonging to the English with their marks, examining and finding the truth of it, they shall be restored and the same, the English shall do, if any of my people's goods are taken, in any boats by them and so we agree. (5) There is war between the Portuguese and Dutch and my people shall neither help the English nor them by any means, and the peace between me and the English shall be performed without any difference. (6) Articles from the Fort St. George treaty viz. 3,6,7,9, and 11 accordingly apply to Bombay factors also. (7) That it being proposed by the English that the *Subedar*, when he will, shall not send ambassadors to Bombay and none to send but myself having any considerable matter I will send and if it be no small matter, the *Subedar* shall send the person with his letter to Bombay to send me the same. (8) That it being proposed by the English that they having differences with the *Siddi* and if occasion should happen, I shall assist them, which I promise to do. (9) That it was proposed by the English that their *Phattemar* should freely pass and re-pass with their letters without any hindrance by the people of the watch or any other, the *Phattemars* that shall bring or carry their letters, it being under their seal, being examined shall not be hindered."[74]

It seems that Sambhaji not only confirmed his friendship, but also promised to pay the English 12,000 pagodas on account of the losses suffered by them due to Maratha military action at Rajapur and Hubli in the past. He also granted permission for the establishment of English factories at Cuddalore and Thevanapatnam, and allowed them exemption from customs duty in the Carnatic.[75] Sambhaji wanted to play the role of a master-strategist during the course of negotiations as it was entirely on the strength of this understanding that Sambhaji tried his luck against the *Siddi* once again. Albeit, he failed to achieve anything substantial this time too. On the other hand, Keigwin continued to exhibit his sincerity towards the cause of Bombay-Maratha 'friendship'. It is illustrated in the Factory Records that in March 1684 *Siddi* Qasim, along with his fleet (which had arrived back from Goa), desired to proceed to Bombay for the purpose of sheltering of his fleet. But, he was checked in doing so by the Keigwin administration. He was, instead asked to carry on to Mazagaon. In this way, for the first time in history, the *Siddi* was not allowed to use the facility of Bombay for the purpose of wintering. To add to *Siddi*'s agony, the *Siddi* observed that there was a strict watch on the surrounding wall (on the Bombay fort) all the while he stayed there. Furthermore, he was conveyed by the English in no unambiguous terms that he can hope to get a supply of water only. *Siddi* Kasim was further incensed when he was not supplied with any provision at Underi. In Sept 1684, therefore, he went to Surat as it would have been impossible for him to stay in Bombay without any help.[76] Keigwin's initiatives (towards the Marathas) worked wonders and both the sides pursued their activities without any fear or apprehension of each other. On the whole, form the point of view of Anglo-Maratha relations, the short reign of Keigwin (even though illegal from the point of view of the British East India Company's administrative set-up in India), was a special period for the Maratha King as well as the English. The English seem to have benefited in particular, as they could minimize the Company's losses by way of peaceful commerce in the Deccan. Commenting on Keigwin's period in office at Bombay, Anderson has written, "It is an episode of which we are not ashamed. Keigwin's moderation and shining qualities, his sound internal and external policy, and his honesty of purpose, more than atoned for his unconstitutional conduct."[77]

Keigwin's authority came to an end in November 1684. But, the East India Company learnt quite a few important lessons from the entire experience. The Company, which had largely been on the receiving end, as far as its relations with the native powers of India are concerned, immediately embarked upon a new policy with respect to them. As per the changed policy, trade was still to be the sole aim of the Company, but *oppressions from the country powers were to be combated by force of arms*. The Company still maintained, however, that its object was trade - not territorial aggrandizement. In 1684, the Court of Directors of the Company, under the chairmanship of Sir Joseph Ash, declared that though the aim of the Company was trade and not conquest, it was necessary to have forts for the protection of their stocks. With this end in view, orders were sent to construct a fortified wall round Madras and have a fort in Bengal.[78] The fact remains that the English King James II was a considerable stakeholder in the Company and was willing to do all he could to advance its interests. Hence, in 1686, the Chairman of the Court of Directors of the Company highlighted the plight of the Company in the following words, "...daily affronts, great indignities, and often slighting... honour of the King and country that now lies bleeding..."[79] Now, with the King as patron, it was not difficult to switch over from a policy of peace and persuasion to that of authority and assertion. It was at the same time that, for the reasons of security, the Company felt the need to shift its headquarters on the western coast from Surat to Bombay. The factors which influenced the decision were not too many. The ongoing Mughal-Maratha war had resulted in severe losses to the Company's trade for which no compensation was coming from any quarters. Moreover, the Mughal officials were in the habit of making unjustified and exorbitant financial demands on the Company traders for their personal gains. Their factory at Surat was totally encircled in the Mughal territory and did not stand any chance to defend against an eventuality of a Mughal aggression. The precarious position of the Surat Factory was repeatedly exploited by Shivaji in the recent past too. Moreover, the *Siddi*, under the Mughal patronage, were perennial source of trouble to the English. They often forced the Company administrators at Surat to get their demands fulfilled. On the top of that, Aurangzeb had recently enhanced the customs duty at Surat and Bombay from 2% to 3.5 - 4 %.[80]

How accurate was the Company in comprehending the politico-military situations in India, and how far was its decision to redefine its relations with respect to the Indian native powers was justified, is not very difficult to guess. But, the fact remains that in 1685, the Company was still in no position to face the Mughal military might either in the eastern or in western India. It could not afford to initiate a full-fledged military campaign against the native powers on land with only a handful of trained European soldiers on their pay-roll. As a matter of fact their prime requirement was to strengthen their defenses (in India) in such a manner that their position was unassailable. From that point of strength they needed to increase their military capabilities so as to be a match to any of the native powers. The Company, therefore, as a preventive measure, and also in accordance with the directives of the Court of Directors issued in 1684, ordered for raising fortifications in Bengal immediately. The works of fortifications at Bombay had already commenced a few years back in view of the recurrent Maratha threat. However, the island of Bombay was still vulnerable in many respects and it was being exploited duly by the Company's enemies.[81] In the English Factory Records, there are numerous references of the Portuguese collecting taxes and customs duty at Thane or Karanja on the essentials meant for Bombay. On the other hand, the Marathas used to append to the miseries of Bombay by occasionally denying the supply of wood, oil, fuel and food to Bombay from their territory. Hence, on the western coast, it was prudent for Bombay to avoid any serious conflict with the Mughals or even the Marathas, till the time 'Bombay was made so formidable that the appearance of it may fright the Mughal government and Sambhaji Raja.'

It is fascinating to note that Bombay administrators were reluctant to allow the *Siddi* to winter at Bombay even after it was restored to the Company following the surrender of Keigwin. The Bombay factors made it known to Surat vide their letter dated 18th July 1685. They also wanted to recover export duty on tobacco from the *Siddi* trading at Bombay.[82] It is doubtful whether Bombay's wishes were granted by Surat in this respect. Its interaction with the Marathas, however, continued without any perceptible change from the Keigwin period. There were some disputes regarding the collection of excise duty on food grain and wood procured by the Company from Maratha territory. To find an amicable solution to this dispute, the Company's administrators at Surat took initiative and sent a representative to the Marathas. The representative was sent along with two rifles to further oblige the Peshwa who had made a demand of them previously. It should be noted that on a prior occasion, similar demand was rejected by the British on some flimsy pretext.[83] The desire of the Company's government at Bombay to keep Sambhaji placated can further be guessed by the fact that in the year 1686, the Company's Court of Directors in London issued specific instructions to Surat to establish a friendly relation with Sambhaji, secure permission to trade in his territory and promptly fulfill the latter's demand of 'gun-powder, guns, small ammunitions, shots etc.' on annual basis. The documents further suggest that the supply of these articles to India was 'doubled' so as to accommodate the Maratha demand on a regular basis.[84] Furthermore, as noticed in the earlier section, not only was the *Siddi*, once again, denied any help against the Marathas when he was raiding the Maratha territory of Chaul in 1686, but also, as a gesture of goodwill and trust, Bombay offered its help and active service to the Sambhaji for the defense of the island fort of Khanderi against a possible *Siddi* onslaught. Both the sides, however, were keen to utilize the amicable understanding to further their respective goals. Envoys were exchanged regularly. Late in 1687, another agreement of mutual cooperation was signed between them. According to the terms of this settlement, the English agreed to check the activities of the *Siddi* directed against the Maratha in return for money and food grain. As noted earlier in this chapter, a British naval contingent consisting of 1 large ship and a number of boats and Galvats were subsequently deployed in the creek of Korlai to keep a vigil on the movement of *Siddi* vessels in the adjoining area.[85] This arrangement could also be seen as the desire of Sambhaji to have a strategic naval alliance with the English, as he was badly in need of time, energy and resources to deal with the determined Mughal onslaught in the Deccan. He, on no account, could have ignored the grave challenge posed on two different fronts, viz. the Mughals army on land and the *Siddi* on water. Hence, this naval alliance, howsoever temporary, could be seen as a significant achievement of Sambhaji's military policy.

Once Sambhaji was hard pressed by the encircling Mughal forces in the Deccan, he had very little time to devote on any other affair of the state. The English were repeatedly approached for ammunitions etc. but they could hardly meet the ever growing requirements of the 'fast sinking' Maratha *Swarajya*. The English, however, did not severe their relations with the Marathas. On the other hand, after the death of Sambhaji, especially when Bombay itself was threatened by the *Siddi* invasion, the English sought to conclude a permanent military cum friendly alliance with the Mughals. We shall take a note of this in another section of this chapter. Let us now examine the main features of Maratha relation with the Portuguese during the reign of Sambhaji.

(C) SAMBHAJI AND THE PORTUGUESE -

The Portuguese were comfortably rooted on the Konkan coast since long. They had maintained their strong-hold over the Konkan waters by making the best use of their organized fleet. However, of late, their unique position in the Konkan waters had been challenged by various contenders in the surroundings. The Dutch and the English had already made a severe dent in their share. Shivaji had also given them nightmares by constructing a competent flotilla and had held the Maratha flag flying high in the Konkan waters. As noted earlier, his vessels moved at ease and even made prize catches of the Portuguese vessels in the vicinity of the Portuguese bases. The Portuguese were seemingly on the path of decline in the East at the time when Sambhaji inherited the Maratha *Swarajya.* Still the Portuguese could not be taken lightly as their navy was still strong enough to take on with any of the native contenders on the Konkan coast. Through their naval fleet they exercised control over the coastal waters as well as the various pockets on the Konkan coast they had occupied with the passage of time. Bassein, Chaul and Goa were their nodal centers along with few more fortified locations on the western coast of India through which they managed their '*Estado da India*'.

Sambhaji's interactions with the Portuguese appear to be more 'happening' particularly in the backdrop of the short span of his reign as the Maratha monarch. In fact, soon after succeeding to the throne, Sambhaji had opened up the channel of diplomatic correspondence with the Portuguese (at Goa). He expressed his desire to have a peaceful and friendly relation with them. The Portuguese Viceroy of Goa also reciprocated in a befitting manner by immediately declaring the cessation of all hostilities against the Maratha country. Gifts were sent for the new Maratha King and the Portuguese desire to have a 'perpetual, firm and reliable peace' was also conveyed along with. However, very soon cracks appeared in the bilateral relations over a host of issues. It became evident that there was more than mere projection of military/naval might and sovereignty over the coastal waters of the Konkan that brought the Marathas and the Portuguese at loggerheads. These issues ranged from the desire for peaceful and free navigation/passage of the vessels in the Konkan waters to the capture of strategic points (by both the parties) on the coast and elsewhere. It also included, more specifically, the issue of political interference of the Portuguese in the internal affairs of the Marathas by way of providing clandestine support to the recalcitrant elements of the Maratha *Swarajya* viz. the Desais of Kudal and the Sawant of Wadi etc. The situation was not different from what existed during the reign of Shivaji in any significant manner.

Sambhaji's policy towards the Portuguese may be portrayed as the one essentially guided by the concern to uphold a respectable position vis-à-vis the Portuguese in the

Deccan as well as in the Konkan waters. Right from the beginning, therefore, Sambhaji did not hesitate to make use of his naval and military might to achieve his objectives. He also understood it evidently that the edifice built by the European Trading Companies on the western coast and elsewhere in India was supported by the strength of their respective navies. The European overseas mercantile enterprise was backed by their specialized naval crafts which were appropriately equipped for long voyages as well as fights on the high seas. But, Sambhaji was also confident of the naval capabilities of the Maratha *Swarajya*. Hence, as regards the matters pertaining to the projection of the Maratha naval might, he tended to justify, carry on with and even expand the policy as laid down by his illustrious father and predecessor Shivaji. This was bound to bring him in confrontation with the other contenders in the vicinity. We have already had a brief overview of the Maratha encounters and experiences with the *Siddi* and the English. A few of the crucial events defining the Portuguese-Maratha relations during Sambhaji's period could be discussed under the following heads.

The tussle for Anjadiv and action at Chaul: Nothing could define the naval priorities of Sambhaji much better than his desire to get hold of Anjadiv, a desolate island in the vicinity of Goa. This attempt could well be understood in terms of the need to have more naval bases to support the naval establishment of the *Swarajya*. The English factors at Karwar report that Sambhaji had already started collecting necessary materials with the intent of fortifying the island.[86] It seems that the Portuguese got inkling about Sambhaji's designs on Anjadiv. Hence, in a swift movement the Portuguese landed a big contingent of soldiers at the island before Sambhaji could actually go ahead with his plans. The Portuguese action came as a surprise and implied a setback for Sambhaji's naval enterprise. Sambhaji's envoy also lodged a protest with the Viceroy of Goa, only to be rebuffed by the reply that the island lay in their jurisdiction.[87] It is interesting to note that the Portuguese quickly commenced fortifications of the island after securing it by way of landing and even completed in a couple of months. The Portuguese, of course, did not want to take any chances. They had before them the examples of the island bases like Khanderi, Underi, Suvarnadurg, etc. They could well comprehend the nuisance value of such bases if they were possessed by 'unfriendly neighbours'. The Portuguese, therefore, thought it prudent not only to deny the enemy any access to it but also to make it suitable for their own purpose. Hence, a fortification was erected round the island and a garrison was posted too. It is also believed that the fear of the Portuguese regarding the Maratha usage of the island was compounded by their apprehension that the Marathas might transfer the control of the island to the Arabs. The Portuguese, as such, were uncomfortable at the prospects of the Arab-Maratha friendship. Hence, the very thought of the island going to the Arabs, the most hated of their enemies, would have sent shock waves to Goa. The resultant action was bound to be rapid. In short, the prospects of free navigation for the Portuguese vessels and the concern of security of Goa dominated the concerns of the Portuguese administrators while ordering for the occupation and fortification of Goa.

As regards the Arab-Maratha relation in the period under consideration, a Portuguese letter of the year 1679 highlights the Portuguese anxiety. The extracts of this letter written on 23rd Feb 1679 by one Captain Joseph de Mello Castro are as follows, "I received Shivaji's letter. The gist of what he says is that we should not molest the Arabs in the river. They are his guests and he is going to support them... There are more threats in the letter..."[88] The contents of this letter do not leave us with any doubt, whatsoever, that the Portuguese occupation and subsequent fortification of the island of Anjadiv was also prompted by their genuine fear of the Arab-Maratha relations which appeared to be on full bloom during those days.

It is interesting to note that while the tussle for the possession of the island of Anjadiv was going on, Sambhaji had persisted with the diplomatic channels with them. As noted elsewhere in our discussion, Sambhaji had informed the Portuguese viceroy of Goa regarding the Maratha factories at Kudal and Bicholim that had started manufacturing gun-powder. He also intimated the Portuguese administration of Goa about the possibilities of Maratha vessels transporting the raw materials like sulphur, saltpeter etc. from Karnataka and Malabar. In view of the above, Sambhaji had requested the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa to ensure free navigation of his vessels in the vicinity of the Portuguese bases. The Viceroy of Goa seemingly agreed to the request of Sambhaji which was conveyed to him through his letter dated 28th July 1682.[89] In the same letter, however, the Viceroy had also lodged his protest on the capture and confiscation of

Portuguese cargo, bound for Cambay, by the Maratha navy near Chaul. The Viceroy, in the end, expressed hope that the Marathas would keep into consideration the Portuguese gesture (of allowing the Maratha vessels to sail unmolested) and reciprocate in the same spirit regarding the captured Portuguese cargo vessel. This letter had the desired effect on the Marathas as the Peshwa Nilkanth Moreshwar immediately ordered for the release of the confiscated cargo with a warning to the concerned Maratha *Subedar*, under whose jurisdiction the said incident had happened, to refrain from harassing the Portuguese in future.[90]

The desire to have a hassle-free mutual relation by both the sides was, to a great extent, prompted by naval and other economic considerations. It must be reiterated here that the Europeans in India were still not interested in assuming the role of political powers through territorial conquests. Their activities were largely confined to trading activities and voyages overseas through which they maintained their continued linkages with their respective mother nations. In India, therefore, they were in favour of cordial relations with the native rulers. The Portuguese bases on the western coast of India were in the vicinity of the Mughal and Maratha territories. As the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb had declared war on the Marathas, it was difficult for the Portuguese to select and openly side with either of them. However, they had to make a definite choice, albeit in a clandestine manner, more than often in case of the Mughal-Maratha clash. One such situation occurred right in the beginning of the reign of Sambhaji.

While the Anjadiv episode was going on in 1682, a huge contingent of Mughal troops headed towards the Deccan to reduce Sambhaji. Aurangzeb had also asked for the Portuguese cooperation in all possible ways in this expidition. Though the Portuguese viceroy of Goa could get a formal request for the same only late in 1682, he had, as a preemptive measure, briefed his Captains in north-Konkan to allow the Mughal fleet (from Surat), carrying troops and provisions, to pass through the Portuguese waters at Thane and Bassein.[91] This was no small a favour bestowed upon the Mughals, who needed to be quick in their offensives, on the Marathas. The Mughal action against the Marathas was further facilitated by the permission (granted by the Portuguese) to proceed through their territory and even procure grains and other necessities in their territory. By doing so, the Portuguese acted in a prejudiced manner towards the Mughals and, at the same time, acted against the interests of the Marathas. It should be kept in mind that the fortunes of the Maratha *Swarajya* rested on the final outcome of this conflict. Sambhaji, therefore, to forestall the Mughal advance through north-Konkan, decided to erect a fort at Parsik - at the entry near Kalyan-Bhiwandi. But the Portuguese not only foiled the Maratha attempts to do so but also wrested Parsik from them and fortified it instead.[92] The Portuguese eagerness to get hold of Parsik and create a fortification of their own should not be seen as mere attempt to bail out the Mughals, but also as a well considered step towards the accomplishment of the bigger goal of securing their own interests by way of occupying all the strategic points essential for free navigation of their vessels in the Indian waters.

A Maratha post at Parsik would have brought discomfort to the Portuguese navigation and other types of movements, hence the Portuguese wrested its control from them. This action served two purposes of the Portuguese. The first, apparently, was the expression of their commitment to the Mughal cause; the second, more importantly, but concealed, was their own naval and strategic considerations. It is interesting to find that, despite Mughal insistence, the Portuguese Viceroy had very politely refused to declare hostilities on the Marathas, citing the existence of amicable relations with the latter at that point of time. This was the Portuguese 'diplomacy at its best', as the Portuguese proved a point with the Marathas as well as the Mughals regarding their commitment for peaceful and friendly relations. The Portuguese action, however, was bound to cause frustration in the Maratha camp which was denied the control over two strategically crucial areas in military and naval terms. Sambhaji, therefore, retaliated by plundering, pillaging and burning many a large part of the coastal possession of the Portuguese in the upper Konkan. The anti-Portuguese Maratha actions have been recorded by the British factors too, in their factory records. The Portuguese also inflicted damages on the Maratha shipping and a low intensity naval conflict began between the two. In the meanwhile, the Mughal offensive against the Marathas on land had also started. The Portuguese Viceroy wanted to make the best out of the situation. Going by the multitude of the Mughal troops, he anticipated Maratha defeat at the hands of the Mughals. Hence, on 12th Apr 1683, he wrote to the Mughal emperor highlighting the Portuguese favour granted to the Mughal contingent intended to facilitate the Mughal action against. In the first instance he reminded Aurangzeb of the free passage given to the Mughal envoy (through the Portuguese territory); in the second he highlighted the arrangements made (by the Portuguese) for the Mughal requirements i.e., procurement of food grain and other essentials; and in the third, he assured Portuguese naval assistance in this campaign as six Portuguese vessels were kept ready to join the Mughal fleet. For all these favours, the Viceroy also demanded, as reward, the transfer of 'all the territories taken in conquest (by the Mughals from the Marathas) in the Konkan'.[93] The Portuguese dream, however, did not materialize as the Mughals failed to reduce Sambhaji. The Viceroy, therefore, had to send congratulatory message to Sambhaji on his 'victory' against the Mughals.

But, Sambhaji could well comprehend the dubious role of the Portuguese in the Mughal-Maratha conflict. He was sore at them. In fact, while he was fighting with the Mughals, he had simultaneously initiated military offensives on the Portuguese and carried them to different parts of the Portuguese territory. In the northern Konkan, Tarapur and the adjoining forts were attacked.[94] The Portuguese Chaul was also attacked and besieged late in 1682. Later on, the Portuguese headquarters of Goa was attacked in 1683. In this way Sambhaji was managing war on two different fronts in a competent manner. As compared to the Mughals, the war against the Portuguese required an altogether different approach in terms of military strategy. This was mainly because of the nature of the Portuguese possessions, most of which were distributed along the coast adjoining the Maratha territory. Hence, against the Portuguese, Sambhaji decided to make use of the Maratha navy as well. In a tactical manner, the Maratha army was to complement the navy of the *Swarajya*. The Maratha army was pressed into action in an effort to put pressure on the Portuguese possessions on the coast from the land side. The chosen points of the Maratha attack were the naval strongholds of the Portuguese in the vicinity of the Maratha territory. In a simultaneous military action, therefore, the Portuguese possessions on the west coast were attacked by Sambhaji. The Persian Akhbarat[95] dated 20th of June 1682 reports that the Marathas had surrounded the fortress of Chaul at that time. But they were repulsed by the Killedar of the said fort. The main grievance behind the Maratha action on Chaul, it is believed, was caused by the refusal of the Portuguese Viceroy to allot a strip of land to them at Chaul (which could be used as a secure place on the coast by them). Sambhaji's contention was that since similar permission was granted to the *Siddi* in the past, hence it was unfair to deny the 'friendly' Marathas a similar privilege. The desire to have yet another holding which could be used as **military/naval base** on the Konkan sea board could not be disregarded for this action of Sambhaji. Once again his attempts to augment the genuine requirements of military/naval defenses of the Maratha *Swarajya* were frustrated. Soon he got a pretext[96] and made a daring attempt of laying siege to the Chaul. Chaul was thus besieged so that the Portuguese could be coerced to allow the Marathas to have yet another foothold in Chaul.

While the siege of Chaul was on, the Maratha forces quickly devastated a large part of the Portuguese possessions in the north-Konkan. The Jedhe Chronology notes that Sambhaji had besieged the *Firangan* (indicative of the area under the Portuguese control).[97] The contemporary Portuguese documents as well as the British Records of early 1683 inform us that the Marathas had ravaged and burnt several villages falling under the Portuguese territory.[98] The Jaipur Akhbarat adds that Sambhaji had captured two of the Portuguese forts by the 8th of Feb 1683.[99] In the month of April 1683, the Portuguese strongholds situated in the area from Daman to Bassein were attacked. Villages were burnt, ships were taken away and even the priests were captured as per the Portuguese records.[100] The Portuguese retaliated too by inflicting damages on the Maratha shipping and also by putting the Maratha envoy under arrest. As these skirmishes were going on, the actual Maratha assault on Chaul took place.[101] The English factors write that the Marathas attacked Chaul on the night falling between the 22nd and 23rd July, 1683 with a force comprising of 2000 horses and 6000 infantry. The English letter was addressed to the East India Company's headquarters at London. The factors also mentioned that they anticipated the success of the Marathas as the siege was pressed by a considerably large force. This particular Maratha action, intended to physically capture the fort, was conceived keeping in mind the forces actually held on ground. The actions included scaling of the walls of the fort with the help of ladders, and then the actual combat inside the fort.[102] The reference of the Maratha fleet, therefore, does not come at all. This does not mean that the navy was not pressed into service. Considering the point of attack of the Marathas, it could be assumed safely that the navy must have been kept alert for strategic purposes. As the siege continued successfully for more than a couple of months, there is a possibility that the Maratha vessels were deployed at strategic points in the surroundings of Chaul so that the approach of any enemy vessel to relieve the besieged garrison at Chaul could be checked. It is a matter of speculation, though, as to why there is no reference of any Portuguese vessel (either for the purpose of fighting or otherwise) going near Chaul. The Portuguese navy was not pressed into action even after the Peshwa landed with 7000 men in the month of September 1683, with the intension of reinforcing the besiegers of Chaul.[103] On the contrary, the Maratha action led to the exodus of almost four thousand Portuguese from Chaul to Bombay. It should be kept in mind that, for the Portuguese, the only possible option to make good their escape from Chaul to Bombay was via the sea![104] Strangely enough, the Portuguese administrators of Bassein and Goa rather requisitioned for the Mughal naval help finding that the situation at Chaul had reached a critical point. It should be remembered here that the *Siddi* had been allotted some land at Portuguese Chaul in the past; hence, the *Siddi* came forward for the rescue by reportedly sending 400 men to the aid of the Governor of Chaul. Though this might not have been enough to relieve the besieged Portuguese garrison, the help kept coming in various ways. The contemporary Portuguese documents record that *Siddi* naval vessels were further pressed into service for the transportation of a Portuguese contingent of Bassein. This was a specially constituted contingent by Manuel Lobo De Sylveria, the General of Bassein, to relieve the garrison of Chaul. The said contingent was transported by Yakut Khan[105] (along with his own soldiers) to Revadanda by sea. Yakut Khan, displaying his tactical acumen, also anchored few of his fighting vessels in the river of Karanja. As a result, Sambhaji's naval fleet, comprising of 76 galvats which were stationed at Nagaon, could not reach Karanja. They were denied entry into the open sea. This masterful act of Yakut Khan which rendered the Maratha naval contingent at Nagaon ineffective, was well conceived. By doing so, not only did he avoid picking up any direct conflict with the Marathas, but also warded off any possibility of a meaningful use of the Maratha vessels based at Nagaon. The limitations of the Maratha navy came to the fore, once again. It was not yet prepared to take up the Mughal challenge. An important aspect of the naval warfare practiced at that time got highlighted, viz. the policy of naval blockade. By mere guarding of the mouths of rivers and denying access to the sea, the enemy's fleet could be suffocated. The crucial lesson learnt was: till the time the channels and sea lanes are secured, the navy could not play the desired role.

Alongside the brilliance of *Siddi*'s naval strategy and limitation of Sambhaji's navy, the most intriguing part of the entire episode is the inclusive absence of the Portuguese naval action against the Marathas. Let us now examine the factors that constrained the Portuguese navy to keep aloof from the action field in spite of the pressing urgency. A quick sift through the contemporary documents present the picture that the Maratha action was not just rapid but was widespread too. Sambhaji had undertaken simultaneous attacks on various Portuguese possessions. As a result the Portuguese were kept guessing as to what to defend and what to leave. Sambhaji had thus proved his worth as a competent 'General' as per the philosophy of the great military thinker of China Sun Tzu who lived in the 6th century B.C. Sun Tzu had said, " The General who knows what to attack and when to attack is better as the enemy would not know what to defend and where to defend..." On the same night when the Maratha troops were landed at Chaul, Sambhaji also attacked the Revadanda fort, the walls of that city and also the Korlai fortress.[106] As the Peshwa was rushed to Chaul with additional contingent in Sept 1683, Sambhaji also threatened the very Portuguese headquarters at Goa. In the meanwhile, the Maratha troops were capturing and ravaging the northern possessions of the Portuguese. A Portuguese letter addressed to the Viceroy reads, "The enemy (Marathas) ... *has inflicted* severe damage in the Bassein district. Kalyan, Sayban (Sion), Mannor were captured by the enemy along with the Aseri fort again. The enemy is fighting to capture Karanja, Mahim and Tarapur forts and has taken possession of the territory from Kasba Bassein to Madrapur... while the islands of Belapur and Sashta are being successfully defended by the Portuguese..." By the month of December 1683, the Marathas had extended their control over Mahim, Quelme (Kelve-Mahim), Duntarah, Sarregaum, Suparah, and seven forts and Sabage town. [107] They landed at Karanja[108] and had kept 200 soldiers in readiness at Nagothana. The Viceroy of Goa was left without clues as regards the method to contain the Maratha onslaught. It is said that the Viceroy of Goa, under such circumstances, arranged for some ships to be kept ready under the command of Gen De Costa, to sail to the north for the defense of Chaul. The Viceroy, however, could not dispatch ships in face of a threat of Maratha invasion on Goa itself.

He had to contain himself with the deployment of a small ship with ammunition to Chaul.[109]

The Viceroy, at the same time, worked on a different plan to counter the Marathas. In order to relieve Chaul, he needed to divert the attention of the Maratha besiegers from Chaul. He was looking for some more allies who could be used against the Marathas. In fact, he found a few 'promising' allies also in the form of the Desais and Sawants of south-Konkan, who were always in the look-out for any opportunity to break-free from the Maratha control. On the assurance of the help of such recalcitrant Maratha elements, the Viceroy of Goa planned to lay siege of the Maratha fort of Phonda (just a couple of miles away from Goa). Commenting on the Portuguese action, A. R. Kulkarni, also suggests that the main cause of the Portuguese audacity at Phonda was the support and collaboration of the Desais with them.[110] The bait of the Viceroy worked and Sambhaji had to rush to the rescue of Phonda. The entire incident is described by a one Father Pierre Joseph d' Orleans. He writes, 'Dom Francisco de Tavora, the Viceroy of India (Goa), not being able to relieve Chaul, since he was too far off, decided to make a diversion by besieging Phonda, one of Sambhaji's fortresses, a place only a league from the Goa island. Sambhaji, to whose interest it was to retain a place so close to Goa, raised the siege of Chaul and marched to the relief of Phonda which was already partially destroyed...'[111] Manucci, on the other hand, has an interesting story to offer to us regarding the 'actual' intent of the Viceroy behind laying siege to Phonda. He writes that Sambhaji had deputed two spies to the Viceroy, who told him about the great treasures in the fort of Phonda, to tempt him to leave Goa with a large army for its conquest.[112] Manucci probably wanted to justify the urgency of Sambhaji to attack and capture Goa which was undertaken while the Portuguese siege of Phonda was on. Whatever the considerations of the Viceroy might have been, the outcome of his actions, for sure, was far from encouraging from the Portuguese point of view. Sambhaji indeed showed eagerness in retaining a military base so close to Goa for strategic purpose. He, therefore, supervised the counter-operations at Phonda from Rajapur. He started with quite a big military contingent comprising of 8000 horses and 1500 infantry.[113] In the meanwhile, early in November 1683, the Portuguese bombardment on the Phonda fort had commenced.[114] The Desai of Kudal was actively assisting the Portuguese. The arrival of the Maratha reinforcement, however, made the task of the attackers difficult and they had to retreat immediately. In this commotion, it is said that the besiegers left behind their baggage of ammunitions. Fortunately for them, the Portuguese navy, which was stationed in the vicinity to keep an eye over the situation, showed up for rescue and the retreating party sailed in boats to make good their escape.[115] The importance and role of the naval vessels, even in an essentially non-naval conflict, in conveyance and transportation of troops was thus, highlighted once again. The Portuguese troopers gained a timely and safe refuge through water and saved themselves from being captured by the Maratha army.

Elsewhere, the battering of the Portuguese possessions continued. We have noted the success of the Peshwa in the north-Konkan. Karanja was occupied and the occupation of this island by any other power than the one possessing Thane could have adverse impact on the safety and security of Thane itself. The success of the Marathas excited the English factors so much that they started calculating in terms of Sambhaji being in possession of Thane and Salsette held by the Portuguese.[116] The situation indeed became precarious for the Portuguese who could not do much to safeguard their possessions against the determined Maratha onslaught. So relentless and simultaneous was the pressure from the Marathas that the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa who, it is believed, had arranged for some ships under the command of Gen De Costa for the purpose of the defense of Chaul and other Portuguese possessions in the north, could not dispatch the ships to Chaul. He had to be contented with the deployment of a small ship with ammunition to Chaul because the threat of the Maratha invasion was looming large over Goa itself after their encounter at Phonda. Goa, the seat of the Portuguese Viceroy of India, needed to be defended at all costs. The Viceroy's apprehensions were not totally unjustified. After tasting success at Phonda, the Maratha morale was high. They looked determined to make one more serious attempt to 'chase the foreigners out of India'. With this purpose in hand they rushed towards Goa.

Invasion of Goa: From the Phonda side Goa was separated by a channel of river; an island called Saint Stephen is located just opposite to the city of Goa. Unfortunately, from the point of view of the Portuguese, the river channel was fordable under normal circumstances and one could have walked across the channel to reach Goa. The problem (for the Portuguese) was more so because the area comprising of Bhatagram and Phonda, situated on the nearer side of the river, were under the control of the Marathas. Keeping this in view, the Portuguese had constructed a fort at on a hill in St Stephen so that a vigilant watch could be kept on this crossing. Watch-towers were also built on the banks of the river on the other side to keep the movements through this channel under proper observation. This was a good ploy to prevent the enemy's incursion from this side. But Sambhaji succeeded in deceiving the vigilant Portuguese and managed to land some Marathas on the island of St. Stephen on the night of 24th of Nov 1683.[117] The timing was perfect on two accounts. First, the river channel was nearly dried (hence easily fordable); second, the darkness of the night was used to carry out the surprise operation. The surprise was followed up by speedy action to take control of the island. By the next morning the Portuguese defenders, including the Viceroy of Goa, came out to regain the control of St Stephen. The Marathas were more determined and could manage to thwart the counter-offensive launched by the Portuguese Viceroy in person. It is reported that the Marathas captured the horses of the Portuguese as the latter fled using boats. The boats, once again, proved handy for the Portuguese as they could save themselves from the pursuing Marathas. Though, the Maratha heroics of St. Stephen do not find mention in any of the contemporary documents, it seems probable that this island was occupied as a prelude to the invasion of Goa. As noted above, the territories beyond the island were under the Maratha occupation. The success at Phonda and Bilochim had brought the Marathas nearer to the Portuguese headquarters at Goa. Sambhaji's daring attempt on Goa (immediately afterwards) has been recorded by the Portuguese and the Marathas alike. As per the records, Sambhaji led the Maratha attempt on Goa. The story (of Sambhaji's urgency to capture Goa) goes like this: As Sambhaji wanted to attack Goa, he pursued the fleeing Portuguese. The tide in the river rose at that hour. Taking advantage of the tide, the Portuguese broke the bunds of the rice fields on the outskirts of Goa town. This inundated the fields with river water, thus in effect, increasing the width of the river. It is believed that Sambhaji was prevented from attacking Goa by the rising tide as the horse he was riding, was being forced down by the current in the stream of the high tide. Seeing this, Khandoji Ballal jumped into water, without any thought of his safety and rescued his Master. He was generously rewarded by Sambhaji for this brave deed.[118] Chitnis has also given a faint reference of this event.

The story narrated above gives us an insight into yet another vital aspect of the maritime and naval activities/warfare in the 17th century. The lesson is about the effect of the tidal occurrences on the creeks, bays and coast etc. Sambhaji, in the spurt of the moment (as his men could capture St Stephen), had failed to take into consideration the natural phenomenon of the tidal occurrences. He carried on with his military adventure totally unmindful of the rising tide thereby risking his own life. This was, at least, not expected from a ruler commanding an extended coastline. It should be kept in mind that he had inherited a reasonably effective naval establishment which was well versed to tactically utilize the tidal effects as well as the shallow surroundings of the coast for its operational maneuvers. Anyway, the end result was that Goa was saved from a direct Maratha invasion. The 'intervention of the tide' further granted the Portuguese the much needed time to arrange for the re-strengthening of the defenses of Goa. This included the strategic deployment of the naval vessels too, in the surroundings of Goa, as the Portuguese could no longer afford taking any further risk against the Marathas. It is believed that the Portuguese had positioned their fleet at the mouth of the Mandovi river and near the forts of Agwad, Chapora and Murgaon so that the entry of any Maratha naval vessels to Goa could be made impossible. The Portuguese succeeded in their plan as there was not reported attempt of the Maratha vessels forcing their way to Goa. Moreover, the deployment of troops across the fordable channel further restricted the Marathas to make another daring attempt through that way. The only way to reach Goa was by fording the river channel but that also seemed a remote possibility in view of the enhanced concentration of the Portuguese troops across the channel on the mainland. Thus, Goa was secure from the Maratha aggression. The situation of Goa at that point of time, in the words of the French factor Francis Martin, was summed up as under, "The condition of the Portuguese in Goa had become very precarious. The Viceroy was defending the territory to the best of his capacity. He was trying to prevent the enemy from entering the island of Goa. The Portuguese were awaiting help from the Mughals and were fully dependent on the same".[119]

The safety of Goa was vital for the very survival of the Portuguese *Estado* in India. The difficulty the Portuguese had faced while countering a surprise attack from the Maratha on Goa was too obvious to be ignored. It had exposed the loopholes in the Portuguese defenses of Goa when the enemy was too near to it. The Viceroy too understood this handicap. Hence, he did not want to take any further chance. We have the reference of the Mughal vessels approaching Goa, apparently loaded with supplies - meant for the Mughal troops fighting the Marathas in the lower Deccan. The convoy was being commanded by Admiral *Siddi*. As it approached near Goa and sought permission to sail through the Mandovi river (skirting the city of Goa), the Viceroy refused to do so after a careful consideration.[120] As the sailing through Mandovi was likely to endanger the safety of Goa city, the Mughal armada was permitted to pass through Kaysuv instead. In this way, it is evident that the Viceroy did not want to risk the safety of Goa in the wake of the recent happenings. After all, the Mughals were also a 'potential enemy' even though the two had acted in unison against the Marathas.

In the meanwhile Sambhaji, who had been holding 'Kumbhar Juve'[121] belonging to the *Firangis*,[122] decided to retreat in haste after the failure of the Goa adventure. He could anticipate that the Maratha troops could be cornered by the Mughal army and the Portuguese fleet from the surroundings if they stayed there for long. Moreover, Sambhaji knew that the Mughal fleet was also approaching Goa with all the provisions for the Mughal troops fighting against the Marathas in the vicinity of Goa. Hence, he retreated very swiftly and skilfully to Raigad to avoid the Maratha forces being trapped by two enemies simultaneously. In this way, the arrival of the Mughals also possibly saved Goa from another Maratha attack. It is interesting to note that the Mughal troops were also recalled by Aurangzeb soon after. The condition was hence ripe for the Marathas and the Portuguese to negotiate peace. Interestingly, Nicolo Manucci, the Italian adventurer who participated in the Deccan campaign of Aurangzeb, also accompanied the Portuguese emissary to the Maratha King and, admittedly, had a chance to meet Sambhaji in person.[123]

(D) POST - SAMBHAJI PERIOD

The Siddi Attack on Bombay: The western coast of India witnessed naval and supplementary actions for the possession and re-distribution of Konkan in the months following the capture and execution of Sambhaji by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. A *sanad* was issued to the *Siddi* of Janjira which granted him even those territories which he had held previous to the rise of Shivaji. To realize his control over them, the *Siddi* took the districts of Suvarnadurg and Anjanwel, and in 1689, the forts of Rajpuri and Raigad.[124] But, before the *Siddi* could extend his hold over the Maratha territory, he was detailed for an important naval assignment by the Mughal emperor. He was asked to lead the Mughal fleet to carry out an offensive on Bombay. Bombay, it should be remembered, was recently upgraded as the headquarters of the British East India Company in India. Though there were many reasons to justify the *Siddi* led Mughal raid on Bombay,[125] it seems that the Mughal emperor was encouraged by to undertake such an expedition immediately as an extension of his 'final' success against the Marathas. As the role played by the British Company in the Mughal-Maratha conflict was never viewed beyond suspicion by both the sides, Aurangzeb took this opportunity to 'teach a lesson' to the British Company. The Mughal emperor also needed to 'settle accounts' with the British Company in view of the latter's misadventures against the Mughals on the Eastern Coast. Hence, the *Siddi* admiral was instructed to blockade the port of Bombay and attack it simultaneously. The *Siddi* fleet moved swiftly from Danda Rajapuri and Surat to take position. The British at Surat, however, had an inkling of such an act of hostility from the Mughals. Hence, they were on alert. It is said that the British valuables and the Surat office had been, as a precautionary measure, 'transferred' to Swally marine in anticipation of any misdemeanor from the Mughals. In fact, when the Mughal offensive was launched, the Company's governor ran his good office from Swally itself. The British East India Company looked equally resolved to give a 'befitting reply' to the Mughal military adventure, if any, on Bombay. The Bombay Governor John Child promptly issued a warning to the *Siddi* that if he moved his fleet from Danda-Rajapuri, on the other side of the harbour, it would be attacked. Child had made his intent known to the Company's headquarters at England in the following manner, "better to fight it out than purchase a peace that will not only be dishonourable and base and mean, but bring with it great evils and such continual uncertainty to your trade that it may be insupportable."[126] However, as the subsequent events turned up for the English Company, it seems that the Sir John Child did not prove to be as selective and meticulous with his actions as he was with his words, even though he had committed almost the entire resources at the disposal of Bombay. If, on the one hand, Child was too confident of the Company's vessels and its naval strength as compared to his Indian adversary, on the other, he was also totally unmindful of the fact that the very defenses of Bombay still needed a great deal of up-gradation. All the entry points (through sea as well as land) to Bombay needed to be completely guarded if at all Bombay needed to defend itself from any external aggression. To be fair, except for the fort of Bombay, there was nothing on Bombay, including its shores, which could be considered as defendable. The *Siddi* displayed better tactical disposition. He applied the principle of 'Concentration of Force' and heavily outnumbered the Bombay garrison and militia by landing thousands of his men in Bombay. These men were brought in numerous native vessels, big and small, and so were landed at numerous points on the island of Bombay. As a result Sion, Mahim and other outlying points of Bombay were easily captured by the *Siddi* men. The island of Bombay was virtually surrounded. To make the matters worse, the garrison suffered from the action of deserters, who proved to be "more formidable foes to the defenders than 100 black enemies", since they gave their new associates the advantage of their military skill, "teaching them the art of mining and sheltering themselves in trenches and basket works", with such effect, says Ovington, that they were "able in time to bombard the fort with massive stones instead of iron balls, while our shots from thence was scarce able to annoy them."[127] The Mughal adventure did not succeed totally; the hardships suffered by the British during this period at Bombay were no less. Once again, the navy/naval ships saved the day for the Company and they continued with their normal activities on the western coast after a short while.

The above mentioned incidents once again brought to the fore a few crucial points with respect to the naval warfare which could be summarized as follows: For the British, the first lesson was that is was still impossible for them in India to survive without a good holding on the coastal territory, at least; the second - mere possession of a well equipped navy was not enough a criterion to hold their ground against a strong, land based force –

that too, with a workable flotilla. On the other hand, for the Mughals, it could be seen as a reminder that till they improve their means to effectively tackle the British/ Europeans on the water, it was difficult to coerce them thoroughly. In any case, the Mughals, or rather, none of the Indian rulers with coastal possessions, would have liked to chase out the 'merchant/trading bodies' of Europe from the Indian waters in view of the lucrative commerce they brought along.

On the other hand, it is interesting to note that Aurangzeb did not restrict his offensives against the British alone. The Mughal emperor, as we notice, was keen to take advantage of the momentum of his 'victorious' forces and establish the Mughal control as far as possible on the Konkan sea-board. The Portuguese, hence, were the next to be targeted. It was not difficult for Aurangzeb to find satisfactory reasons for initiating a military action against them. The *Siddi*, thus, once again got an opportunity to re-establish and extend his hold over the Konkan; this time - at the expense of the Portuguese. Bruce mentions that the *Siddi* attacked Bassein and threatened Salsette in the year 1692, and for the next couple of years continued to ravage the Portuguese territories at ease.[128] The most 'coherent' pretext for the Mughal Action on the Portuguese, interestingly, was the Portuguese sympathy and their 'secret helps' to the newly acclaimed Maratha King Rajaram. It is believed that as the Mughal forces tightened their grip over the Maratha territory after fall of Sambhaji, Rajaram's family was sent by Ramchandrapant Amatya by sea from Rajapur to Honaver and then by land across the Carnatic to Jinjee.[129] The latter was allegedly allowed (as a fugitive Maratha prince) by the Portuguese to pass through their territory, enabling him to make good his escape from the clutches of the Mughals. This had happened despite the Mughal letter written to the Viceroy of Goa as early as May 1689 requesting the latter to be vigilant regarding the escape of Rajaram through his territory. The Viceroy of Goa reportedly sent a letter of compliance to the Mughal official Nawab Bahadur Khan on 12th of May 1689, stating that he had 'immediately sent an order to Desai Khem Sawant' in this regard.[130] That Aurangzeb anticipated the possibility of the fleeing Maratha prince using the sea route to escape from the Deccan is also substantiated by the fact that he had communicated the same to the Portuguese authorities at Goa. A Portuguese correspondence dated 3rd Sept 1689 reads, "...you (the Mughal authority) ask me to post vigil on land as well as on sea to catch *Ramo Raze* (Rajaram) who wants to flee to Karnataka with a treasure which is also to be captured... On this I had posted the necessary vigil...so that he might not have a chance to escape..."[131]

In the meanwhile, the Maratha power had found another base at Jinji, on the eastern coast. Rajaram, the younger son of Shivaji and the brother of Sambhaji, had been accepted as the new Maratha Monarch by the Maratha nobility[132] after the execution of Sambhaji at the hands of Aurangzeb. Though the Maratha politics remained largely subdued as compared to the activities it had witnessed in the preceding three decades, the Maratha movement, nonetheless, remained alive for its 'ever-cherished cause' of *Swarajya*. A large portion of the Maratha coastal and inland possessions was occupied by the Mughals.[133] The new Maratha monarch Rajaram, though practically deprived of the coastal belongings now, did not waste time to set his house in order. He appealed to the Portuguese to continue with the good relations with the Maratha Kingdom as it had existed during the time of his predecessors. This justification of this appeal could be understood in the background of the Portuguese practice of forcing the Maratha navigators in the Konkan waters to purchase the Portuguese *Cartaz* (supplementing the Portuguese claim over the sovereignty of the sea) after the fall of Raigad in 1689. Though Khobrekar has contested that during the time of Shivaji, the Portuguese never succeeded in forcing the Maratha ships to carry a *Cartaz* issued by them.[134]

The Portuguese, however, pretended to be friendly with both the Mughals as well as the Marathas. One of the Viceroy's letters addressed to the emperor of Portugal gives us an insight of the shrewd Portuguese diplomacy during this time. It reads, "...of late he (*Sambhaji*) had been repeating this request (*to renew the alliance of peace and friendship which this state formerly maintained with Shivaji*). We have responded to it with the same demonstration of friendship (as we did in the case of the Mughals) in such a manner and with so great a care that both the vassals of the Mughal and those of Rajaram believe that this government is inclined to the interest of either..."[135] As a result, many of the officials of Rajaram, for fear of Mughal attack on the Maratha territory, had kept their families in the Portuguese territory.[136] It is a different matter altogether that Portuguese, at times, were complaining about the piratical and other hostile activities committed by the 'Shivajees'. A Portuguese letter from the governor of Goa addressed to the newly appointed Maratha *Subedar* of Konkan expressed that 'though Ramchandra Pandit, the Maratha regent, professed nothing but friendship for the Portuguese, he permitted his Galvats to infest their territorial water and make prizes of their trading crafts'.[137] But, on the whole, the relations remained smooth.

II

REVIVAL OF FORTUNES UNDER THE *SARKHEL*: At the time when the Marathas, under the leadership of Rajaram, were trying to regain their foothold on the mainland Deccan, elsewhere in the Konkan, Kanhoji Angre worked meticulously as the Maratha flag bearer on the Konkan coast and its adjoining waters. He had, with him, some sea-worthy vessels with the help of which he was trying to project his 'legal' authority in the matters of coastal navigation. He bluntly refused to acknowledge the Portuguese claims over the sea. At the same time he had started compelling the ships to buy his pass[138] failing which they were deemed 'legitimate prizes' and sent under escort to one of his ports.

To sketch a portrait of this illustrious 'Maratha Admiral' would be beyond the scope of this study. However, to have an account of the strategy and tactics displayed by him during his naval encounters with his adversaries would more than justify our purpose. To start with, suffice is to put on record that Kanhoji Angre (many times referred to as *Conajee Angria* in the contemporary European records) had the kind of upbringing required to excel in his profession. His father Tukoji Sankoji Sankpal[139] was appointed at the post of *Sarnaubat* i.e., the Deputy Commander of Suvarnadurg,[140] one of the coastal forts of the Martha *Swarajya*. In the words of Malgaonkar, "Thus was established a tradition which bound future generations of Angres to ship and to the sea."[141] It is said that Kanhoji Angre had natural inclination towards the seafaring and military activities and that there is a likelihood of his participation as a naval fighter in the Maratha offensive against the *Siddi* of Jnjira during the reign of Sambhaji.[142] Kanhoji had distinguished himself as a committed warrior at a critical situation during the time when he was on the strength of the garrison on the Suvarnadurg fort which was commanded by one Achaloji Mohite. It so happened that the *Siddi* of Janjira, in order to wrest Suvarnadurg from the Marathas, made a strong attack on it, duly supported by his naval fleet. It is said that Achaloji Mohite had fled away and most of the Maratha garrison, including Kanhoji Angre, who had gone out to fight, were captured by the *Siddi* men. Kanhoji, however, made good his escape, and returned back to the fort only to lead the remaining garrison to frustrate the *Siddi*'s attempt on Suvarnadurg.[143] It seems certain that this feat of Kanhoji was well in his mind when Rajaram, the new Maratha monarch, made the grant of the *Subah* of Konkan to Kanhoji Angre (probably by the year 1696). The robe along with title was also conferred upon him accordingly.[144] In the newly constituted council of ministers, Kanhoji Angre's name surfaced as the Deputy to the Maratha *Sarkhel* (Admiral) Siddhoji Gujjar. The later, as the head of the Maratha naval establishment, was given the overall responsibility of defending the coast from both land and sea. Interestingly, however, there was not one, but two deputies detailed to assist the Maratha *Sarkhel*; Bhawanji Mohite was the second incumbent to the post of the deputy.[145] The spheres of influence of the two respective deputies were duly earmarked. While Kanhoji got the command of north Konkan along with the remnants of the Maratha fleet at Suvarnadurg and Vijaydurg,[146] the command of south Konkan, with the formidable sea-fortress of Sindhudurg, was vested in Bhawanji Mohite.[147] Subsequently, the Kulaba province, which was held by one Bhawanji Gujjar Maratha, was also transferred to Kanhoji Angre[148] to enable him to discharge his duties effectively. Thus, Kanhoji got, by 'royal command' an independent charge of a hundred-and fifty miles of wide open coastline. However, as far as the fleet is concerned, he must not have inherited more than eight or ten ships including Galvats and/or lesser vessel.[149] The ground reality at the time of Kanhoji Angre's commissioning in the Maratha nobility has been aptly summarized by Malgaonkar in the following manner, "His (*Kanhoji Angre's*) fighting force was this collection of battered old ships and the ragged garrison of half-a-dozen coastal forts. Some 3000 men had to be fed regularly, even if they could not be paid regularly. By royal command too, the money for all this was supposed to come from the land dependent on the numerous island forts of the Marathas. In actual fact, of course, these forts were either in Mughal hands or dominated by their forces. The morale of his men – if commanders thought in terms of morale in those days – must have indeed touched bottom."[150]

Kanhoji Angre set out on his task and applied himself in his resolve to exercise sovereignty over the sea. He made it clear that it was mandatory for everyone plying in the vicinity of his sphere of activity to purchase his pass lest they should be taken as prize by his vessels. This was the only way to earn revenue as well as to compel the others to accept his authority over the matters of navigation in the Konkan waters. He knew that it would not be easy for him to do so, but he took the chance and largely succeeded too. In this process, though, he made more enemies than friends but he was sure of his capabilities. As has been put by S. N. Sen, '...his prowess was soon rewarded with rich spoils and his neighbours copiously, though involuntarily, contributed to his coffers...but the very process involved hostilities with his neighbours among whom the English and the Portuguese were the most prosperous and powerful. The *Siddi* of Janjira was the avowed enemy of his King and therefore his legitimate prey'.[151] Kanhoji Angre was well aware of what was happening on the western coast. He had a fair understanding of the comparative strength and weaknesses of the various players in the region. In particular, the weakness/helplessness of the Mughal vessels on the high seas was not unknown to anyone. The way Abdul Gaffour's ship,[152] and, later on, the Royal Ship '*Ganj-i-Sawai*' had been made prizes of by smaller/insignificant (in terms of volume, size or strength) European vessels - amply demonstrated the advantages of the European technology. Kanhoji was cautious of his limitations, the biggest being the lack of effective firepower, hence he tried to avoid any confrontations with the English or even the Portuguese initially. We do not have any incidences of his fierce engagement with the *Siddi*'s navy either in the initial phase, that is, till the time he was confident of the strength of his fleet. He had the natural advantage of being familiar with the numerous bays and coves, in addition to the support provided by the guns of the coastal forts. But those advantages could, at best, be utilized for defensive purposes with the kind of vessels he had inherited from his predecessors. Hence, Kanhoji Angre was cautious while choosing his task on the sea. Malgaonkar describes the early maritime activities of Kanhoji Angre in the Konkan waters as that of 'coastal policing' (i.e., pouncing upon ships that did not carry his pass and forcing them to pay ransom) rather than purely naval activities.[153] With the money he obtained through such activities, he not only augmented his fleet but also improved his land force. He wrested some more forts on the coast so that his coastal possessions could no longer be vulnerable in case of an attack originating from the land side. A significant step was taken in the year 1695-96 when he shifted his headquarters from Suvarnadurg to Kulaba for all practical purposes. The defenses of Kulaba were accordingly strengthened in a befitting manner.[154] This implied that he was now confident of his power and standing in the affairs of the Konkan, because being in Kulaba not only meant being too close to the English navy, but also implied coming dangerously close to the arch-rivals, the *Siddi* of Janjira. The shifting was done with calculated strategic considerations too. Sen comments thus, "With the headquarters at Kulaba, Kanhoji was in the happy position to command and control the high road of sea-borne trade that literally passed by his door. With Bombay, Bassein and Surat on the north, and Chaul, Janjira and Goa on the south, the Kulaba fleet could keep a vigilant eye on all vessels sailing from the north to the south and vice-versa while the intermediate ports offered safe asylums in case of emergency and danger."[155]

While Kanhoji Angre was in the midst of all that was happening in the coastal waters of Konkan, Bhawanji Mohite, the officer-in-charge of the southern Konkan, apparently remained dormant at his headquarters Sindhudurg. In the meanwhile the Marathas, under the leadership of Rajaram, were fighting hard and gradually regaining the lost ground in the Deccan. Rajaram made a comeback to the Deccan in 1698. A reshuffle in his cabinet was eagerly awaited in view of the death of Siddhoji Gujjar, the Maratha *Sarkhel*. Kanhoji was sure to be promoted to the coveted post of the Maratha Admiral. His expectations were not belied as he was elevated to the post of *Sarkhel* but Bhawanji Mohite was also allowed to retain the independent charge of the south Konkan.[156] Hence, it is safe to presume that Kanhoji was appointed to the number one position of the Maratha navy with the title of *Sarkhel* in the year 1698.[157] Now he was equipped with the 'legitimate' authority and was more confident than ever in dealing with his opponents.

The new *Sarkhel* looked keen on recovering all the territories occupied by the *Siddi* on the Konkan coast in the interregnum following the fall of Sambhaji and shifting of the base of the Maratha *Swarajya* to Jinji under Rajaram. Hence the stage for a showdown with the *Siddi* was duly set. On the other hand, the *Siddi* of Janjira also felt uncomfortable with the very thought of the enemy operating from so near a base. He could not come to terms with the idea that his 'area' was being encroached upon. Kulaba was too close to Janjira. Hence, the *Siddi* of Janjira, Yakoot Khan, led a naval expedition on Kulaba. His strategy seemed to be simple. It was to force a naval blockade around Kulaba, starve the garrison and compel them to submit. The timing was perfect, as the action was undertaken once the rains were over. The English Company's records from Bombay provide us with the necessary details of the *Siddi* action.[158] The English factors record, "The *Siddi* lies before Caulaby (Kulaba) and Cundry (*Khanderi*), though hath grand force yet Marathas find a way to gallbats (*Galvats*) from one place to another..."[159] For, the *Siddi*, however, the things were better said than done. Kanhoji Angre proved to be a better strategist in this encounter with the *Siddi* on the following accounts:

(1) He had done his basics by stocking the fort with the necessary provisions to hold on its own for a season (Similar strategy was adopted by the *Siddi* with respect to their island fort of Janjira);

(2) He did not commit his vessels to repulse the *Siddi* (and neither did *Siddi* dare to come closer to the wall of the fort which had guns fitted for its defense).

(3) Kanhoji used to ply smaller vessels in order to get the necessities, as and when required (This practice was similar to the one adopted by Shivaji when Khanderi was besieged by the *Siddi* and the English.)

While Kanhoji was resisting the *Siddi* pressure at Kulaba, the Mughals had renewed their pressure on the Marathas. As a result, the Marathas were also fighting near Satara with the Mughals. Unfortunately, during the period of crisis, Rajaram died of pneumonia in March, 1700. Once again, the entire Maratha machinery was jeopardized. But, Tarabai, the widow of Rajaram emerged strong at that hour of crisis. She proclaimed her infant son Shivaji as the new ruler and declared herself as the 'Queen Regent'. Kanhoji Angre did not waste a moment in acknowledging the authority of queen Tarabai and was reconfirmed in his position. Tarabai, the regent, not only faced the mounting military pressure from the Mughals, but also had to attend to many internal issues; hence Kanhoji was virtually free to take his own course of action in the Konkan waters, albeit - in the name of the Maratha sovereign. His cherished desire of getting the independent charge of

Maratha naval establishment was ralised finally in the year 1707 when Tarbai 'promoted' him to the overall command of the fleet.[160] It should be remembered that this was the time when Shahuji, the son of Sambhaji, on being released from the Mughal captivity after the death of Aurangzeb, was staking his claim on the Martha throne.

In the years following the death of Rajaram, nothing special happened in terms of naval conflicts which could give a definite idea regarding the strategy and tactics of Kanhoji Angre in the naval warfare. This does not mean that these years passed off quietly. The struggle with the *Siddi* continued both on land as well as on the sea. In fact, in the year 1701, Tarabai had committed a 20 thousand strong detachment of Maratha fighters under Ramchandra Pant to attack the *Siddi* territory. In this engagement the Portuguese seems to have sympathized with the *Siddi*.[161] The *Siddi* retaliated by laying siege of the fort of Kulaba, once again, and carried off many Maratha vessels from there. The English Records mention that, in terms of men and money, the *Siddi* did not fare well in this endeavour too. The *Siddi* had requested the English for the services of an English surgeon to attend to the wounded men during this engagement.[162] In the year 1702, a Calicut boat with six Englishmen was seized by Kanhoji's patrolling boats. Though, the English Company deputed some officials to secure the release of the Englishmen, it had no effect on Kanhoji.[163] In 1703, Kanhoji seized a Dutch warship of thirty guns. The English were apparently, furious about it.[164] The English, in return, captured a native craft with cargo coming from Aden. The reason for the confinement of the said ship was because of its 'Maratha connection'. The ship was registered at Rajapur and was carrying a pass (*dastak*) issued by Kanhoji Angre.[165] Kanhoji did not retaliate, but chose to keep quiet instead, for the time being. The reasons were not too difficult to trace. He was well aware of the strength (in terms of the seaworthiness and fire power) of the English or the European armed ships. He also understood that the only manner in which his vessels could get even with the bigger European ships was by way of having a hand to hand combat on the enemy's ship-deck. To do so, landing/boarding of the bigger ships, which were more fast and maneuverable (most of the times) in the blue water, was a prerequisite. In this 'unequal' show of strength, obviously it was going to be the qualities of leadership - more precisely the handling of the ships and the crew by Kanhoji, which was going to make the day for him. And for that he needed to be sure that he made the best use of the familiarity with the geographical surroundings in his tactical dispositions.

Well aware of his own limitations, Kanhoji had kept himself preoccupied preparing and strengthening his naval establishment in such a manner so as to effectively meet the 'superior' challenge originating from the Europeans. At the same time, he was gradually getting used to putting his head over his heart while dealing with his adversaries. He had learnt the lesson of dealing with different situations as per its merits. He had been successfully putting to test - his tactical nuances to deal with critical situations. The best thing he did in the opening years of the 18th century was never to get carried away by the enemy's provocations. He tried to get along with the European powers without offending them in any noticeable way. For example, with the Portuguese he was at peace at the beginning. He wanted a market for his prizes and the Portuguese government was prepared to accommodate him while he found suitable customers in the merchants of Chaul, as appears from a letter of the Portuguese Viceroy dated the 8th Nov, 1703.[166] However, it seems that the peaceful relations between the two existed no longer by the time Kanhoji had assumed the independent charge as the Maratha *Sarkhel*. A letter of the Portuguese Viceroy, dated 11th Dec 1708, addressed to the King of Portugal reports that 'the Portuguese state (of India) was engaged in a war with Kanhoji Angre.'[167]

As regards the English, technically speaking, the English, unlike the Portuguese, were never in the race to claim 'sovereignty over the sea'. Hence, in the first instance, there was no theoretical cause for enmity between Kanhoji and the English Company. At the same time, however, it should also be kept in mind that the English never entertained any idea of sovereignty over the Indian waters by any other authority too. Theoretically, it implied, therefore, that the Portuguese too, were not outside the purview of this rule. Hence, the position of the English Company was somehow neutral towards this strife, but it was not willing to compromise, in whatever way, its independent clout in the matters of navigation in the Indian waters. Now, this was a difficult proposition for Kanhoji who found nothing wrong in projecting his 'legitimate' authority over the coastal waters of Konkan. Still, Kanhoji chose not to offend the English Company, by and large, in the matters of the use of the coastal waters. This attitude of Kanhoji has been well reflected in the official deliberations of the Bombay Council. One such deliberation notes, "He

(Kanhoji Angre) had publicly declared that he had 'ordered all his masters of vessels that whenever they met any of our ships, not to interrupt them, but quietly to pass and make them a *Salaam*', which, we believe, was more through fear then any respect of friendship."[168] It would be absurd, however, to jump to a conclusion that it was for sheer fear and awe of the English that Kanhoji had adopted a 'conciliatory' approach towards them. He was, of course, aware that the English ships of that period were the best in all respects – the best rigged and carrying the best guns and shots – but, on the other hand, he was equally well aware of the vulnerabilities of the island of Bombay (from sea as well as from land). Sometime in the year 1704, Kanhoji seemed to have demonstrated his ability to put Bombay to inconvenience by virtually blockading the island. 'He concentrated a few of his Galvats at the mouth of the Pen River, close to Bombay: just that, and nothing more. No shots were fired, no rude notes exchanged, no ships seized and no villages plundered. His mere presence was now enough to block off Bombay's communications with the mainland. All shipping between Bombay and the mainland was paralyzed. Then, after doing sentry duty at Bombay's door for a week, he withdrew his squadron and sailed off on a cruise.'[169] It was a triumph of sheer tactics. In terms of military strategy, Kanhoji was actually buying time. He needed time to strengthen the defenses of his coastal forts and improve the striking capabilities of his fleets up to a satisfactory level, if at all he needed to exercise his authority in the coastal waters of the Konkan. While such preparations were going on, Kanhoji had cleverly kept the English occupied in conversations and negotiations. He repeatedly kept urging the Company officials not to misuse their immunity (from buying Maratha passes for coastal navigation) by allowing the Indian owned ships to be counted with the Company's ships.

Let us now talk about the Dutch and the French. The Dutch factories were located at Surat and Vengurla, as if, at the two ends of the Maratha coastal possessions. As discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the real interest of the Dutch lay outside India, but on the western coast of India, they needed to navigate through the Konkan waters. Hence, there were strong possibilities that they would be running across the Marathas more than often in the coastal waters of the Konkan. But the Dutch, as usual, were competing with the other European Companies for monopoly and supremacy and, apparently, overlooked the native or local factors. Kanhoji seems to have been cautious but for the incidence when he captured a Dutch vessel fitted with guns. The French had a factory at Rajapur and were in line with the Marathas since long. We have already taken notice of their 'outwardly friendly inclination' towards the Marathas during the time of Sambhaji. The French had provided loan to him so that he could continue his struggle against the Marathas. Even Rajaram was favourably disposed towards the French when he was to sell Jinji/Pondicherry.[170]

The most hated enemy of the Marathas in the Konkan (both on land as well as on water) was the *Siddi* of Janjira. Shivaji, followed by Sambhaji, had devised numerous ways and means to get rid of him but fell quite short of mark. After the execution of Sambhaji, Aurangzeb declared the *Siddi* to be the master of most of the Maratha territory in the Konkan. This also included the fort of Raigad which was closely associated to Shivaji. Hence, for the Marathas, there was more than a solitary reason to vie for the life of the *Siddi* of Janjira. *Siddi* was really in an enviably strong position in terms of his defenses.[171] His fleet was also effectively armoured and comparatively sturdier. He did not have to bother about the finances, for he was on the regular payroll of the Mughal monarch as his 'Admiral'. Malgaonkar comments, "the Siddi had two strong backers: Aurangzeb, the Great Mughal, who gave him an annual subsidy of four lakh of rupees to maintain his fleet; and his new-found friends from abroad whom he referred to as 'hat-men', who kept him supplied with the best powder and shot, and who permitted his ships to use their ports freely."[172] The situation, therefore, was not easy for Kanhoji. He realized that in case of hostilities, the *Siddi* would join the English, and he (Kanhoji) was in no position to face the fury of their combined fleet, particularly in his early years. Hence, he avoided to be drawn into a pitched naval battle with the *Siddi*. In case of the *Siddi*'s repeated attempts on Kulaba, he chose to be on defensive and frustrate the *Siddi*'s adventures on his naval posts.

By the time Kanhoji Angre got the independent and overall command of the Martha navy, he had a grand strategy to overcome his limitations. The ship-building enterprise was revamped to suit the specific requirements in the light of the challenges from bigger, sturdier and faster vessels. The biggest impediment in this regard was the demand outgrowing the supply. There was a severe shortage of suitable timber to keep pace with the ambitious plan of adding quality vessels to the fleet. He had, at times, to resort to unjustified practices to obtain timber for his ship-building centers. There is a reference in the English records that Kahoji deliberately seized a reasonably fair quantity of timber[173] meant for the Company's usage and used it for his own purpose. Resorting to such acts, however, would not have served his purpose in any significant manner. But, the main problem with Kanhoji was that he was racing against time. He had to achieve too much in too short a period to be able to exercise his absolute authority as the controller of the Konkan waters. He had undertaken a massive program of forestation wherein teak was planted on a large area including both the banks of the Bankote River which had been cleared for the same purpose. He was farsighted, as he had a definite plan to exercise the Maratha sovereignty on the coastal waters and far off too. But his plan required a period of not less than two decades to give results. He was still young and had made a positive beginning. Kanhoji further imitated the policy of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Navy, in the way that he also invited the European expertise to help him design and equip his vessels. It is mentioned that a Portuguese person named Manual Moraes de Caravello was employed by Kanhoji as an adviser on the design and construction of ships. In fact he gave employment to a number of foreign technicians: gunners, makers of gun barrels and gunpowder, experts in judging horses and many others, but above all, ship builders. Besides Manual Moraes de Caravello, another name also crops up prominently - that of Manuel de Castro - a soldier of fortune who was said to be an expert gunner – or so he said.[174]

Kanhoji Angre thus visualized the Europeans as the biggest competitors in the Konkan waters, hence was gearing-up to meet their challenge accordingly. He must have watched the European ships closely from the island fortress of Suvrnadurg where he had grown up and learnt his first lessons of seafaring. He must have wanted bigger and better designed ships for himself so as to be able to compete with them. The hiring of the European experts in ship-building industry must have helped him in bridging the gap between the European and the Maratha standards, at least.[175] Kanhoji was specifically looking for the fighting ships with superior seaworthiness as well as effective armament. His 'policing vessels' were operating within the sight of the Maratha coast. They were, thus, plying on the shallower waters and always were under the protection of the guns of their coastal forts. The naval tactics were kept simple. Raid the enemy ship, particularly those within the sight of the coast, with ferocity and lure them to chase the Maratha vessels. In this process, the entire effort was directed to entice the enemy ships too close to the coastal guns or too near the shallow waters. If the enemy ship was successfully brought in the vicinity of the coast, it would not get enough wind for its sail and would slow down. Once the maneuvering of those ships became difficult the Marathas fighters would quickly board them by dismasting and surrounding them from different sides. Otherwise, there was always a possibility of those ships hitting the submerged rocks or sand bars to the advantage of the Marathas. Kanhoji would have sought to end the dependency of his ships on the coastal forts and coastal guns so that they could venture far into the blue sea and secure the freedom of navigation. Hence, Kanhoji's grand strategy was to have equivalence in the matters of oceanic navigation in addition to a complete control over coastal navigation.

But this was to be realized in stages. To start with, he needed to strengthen the defenses of his coastal forts and fit on them larger guns to ward off the enemy ships. He worked on it and chose Kulaba as his headquarters because of the obvious advantages it offered as a naval base.[176] Finding crew for his vessels was never a problem as the entire coastal area was replete of the class of hereditary fisher-folk and other castes who could be harmonized, animated and utilized well in the seafaring activities.[177] The biggest advantage with Kanhoji Angre was that, unlike his predecessors, he had a firm base on land too. In other words, he had a fair amount of territory on land (mostly alongside the Konkan coast) under his possession. He also commanded a reasonably ample number of troops, well versed in the art of war. We have already noted that the only way the Maratha could have got better of their European opponents with bigger and faster ships on the water was by boarding them (after dismasting them), followed by a close quarter duel that required sheer bravery along with basic fighting skills. Hence, Kanhoji possessed the obligatory requirements to tackle those who refused to recognize his claim over the Konkan waters.

Kanhoji was still not confidant to venture into deep sea and exercise his authority on the vast ocean which would have been befitting to his position as the Maratha Admiral. Not that he lacked courage or application to do so, but he was hesitant to make deep strides into the sea also because of the more practical concerns and pressing commitments. He faced many challenges and limitations which constrained him from realizing his cherished dream of the undisputed lord of the Konkan waters. The limitations, as we have mentioned above, were mainly in terms of resources (viz. possession of sea-worthy vessels; fire-power, etc.) whereas the challenges were numerous viz. the animosity of European and the Mughal navies. Moreover, the challenges to his authority, in terms of the fear from the land side, were not fewer either. The life and order in the Deccan had been chaotic after the execution of Sambhaji by Aurangzeb. The Martha *sardars* were free to take their own course of action to uphold and salvage the Martha pride. Discipline in the ranks, as it was under Shivaji, had faded away owing to a weaker central command. In fact, under the Regency of Tarabai, feudalism had rather resurfaced in the Maratha administration. Tarabai had little choice but to allow the Maratha Sardars a loose string so that her son's claim could be recognized and upheld in the politically volatile situation following the death of Rajaram in the year 1700. The Maratha Sardars, as a result, could be seen pre-occupied with guarding their selfish interests only too jealously to have allowed any room for the cause of the *Swarajya* or a Maratha confederacy. On ground, therefore, the Marathas never appeared to be a unified body. Even the very term 'loyalty' became very-very subjective. The coming back of Shahuji, the son of slain Maratha King Sambhaji, to Deccan under such a situation further added to this chaos. Shahuji's projection of his legitimate claim over the Maratha throne created a stir in the Maratha politics. Many leading Maratha Sardars were put in a dilemma and many changed sides to buttress the claim of Shahuji, but Kanhoji remained loyal to the cause of queen Tarabai. The rivalry between Shahuji and Tarabai was in full swing in the dying years of the first decade of the 18th century and was finally settled in the year 1713 in favour of Shahuji. While the Maratha politics witnessed a near turmoil, Kanhoji was busy laying his hands over as much area in the northern Konkan as possible. He was justified in doing so because the area was 'awarded' to him by Tarabai, the Maratha Regent. Most of his action was directed against the *Siddi*, as Aurangzeb had made the *Siddi* the master of Konkan after the execution of Sambhaji. Kanhoji, therefore, had to strive hard to achieve a balance as regards his military commitments on the coast and elsewhere. The *Siddi* was always looking for any opportunity to make a good fortune by raiding and pillaging the coastal possessions of the Marathas.

During the Maratha civil war, there appeared a critical juncture, where Kanhoji seemed well prepared to execute the orders of his master to oppose and fight the forces of Shahuji for the Maratha throne, the cementing of the 'old friendship' with Balaji Visvanath, a Brahmin from the Konkan paid rich dividends to Kanhoji. The meeting of the 'old friends' brought about a sweeping change in the power equation of the Maratha politics. Kanhoji was persuaded by the Brahmin, who had also come to him in the capacity of *Peshwa* (Prime-Minister) of the newly crowned Maratha *Chhatrapati* Shahuji, to join the *Chhatrapati*'s side with added benefits. Kanhoji was too shrewd to let slip this opportunity out of his hands. He joined the camp of Shahuji and got more than he had expected.[178] What he got in this bargain was not just a bigger possession on the coast but also (and more importantly) the assurance of his friend Balaji Visvanath who firmly stood by his side, providing him the much needed logistics for his daring military ventures in the years to come. Commenting on the Peshwa-Kanhoji Angre understanding, Ketkar remarks that "the Peshwa, by conferring a legitimate political status (of the Maratha Admiral) on Kanhoji Angre, very skillfully got a brave *Sardar* to the cause of Shahuji. Out of the territory awarded to him (worth an annual income of Rs. 34 lakh), a large portion was under the control of the Siddi."[179] It was Kanhoji's trust in the Peshwa that he could concentrate on his duty as the Maratha *Sarkhel* without having to bother about the military threats originating from the land. With a single mind he took the Europeans 'head-on' in the coastal waters - even when they formed a military and naval alliance against him. The Peshwa was always ready with troops to bail out Kanhoji in case his landed possessions were threatened by the enemies like the *Siddi* of Janjira. The military cooperation to the Maratha *Sarkhel* was continued in the same spirit even after the death of the Peshwa, by his son and successor (to the post of Peshwa), Balaji Baji Rao. Kanhoji Angre, therefore, was in a position to establish his firm authority and exercise Maratha sovereignty on the coastal waters of the Konkan as he entered into the services of the new Maratha sovereign Shahuji. Let us now study the strategy and tactical aspects highlighted in course of Kanhoji in few of his crucial naval engagements against the Europeans and the *Siddi* of Janjira.

Instances have been quoted regarding the daring exploits of Kanhoji Angre in the Konkan waters even before he had risen to the rank of the *Sarkhel* of the Maratha navy.

Most of them refer to his prize catches of some important or precious vessels of the European enemies, and portray a helpless condition of the victims against Kanhoji's navy. These references, however, generally lack any valuable information regarding the strategy or tactical formulations put into use by Kanhoji' fleet during such naval encounters. It is, therefore, a matter of speculations. However, it cannot be denied that Kanhoji must have acted on precise information about the movement of the enemy vessels. After processing the information he must have worked on achieving a surprise on the enemy. The element of surprise must have substituted for the need of a pivot weapon (in this case – effective fire power) for the Marathas and the fate of the opponent was certainly doomed. Further, the element of surprise could not have worked fruitfully unless accompanied with speed and intensity with which the surprise blow was to be delivered. The numerical superiority (in terms of vessels as well as men) must have been another vital element of his naval warfare in the initial phase. In that case, Kanhoji Angre must be complimented for his organizational and commanding skills because, under such circumstances, the effective coordination and maneuver of his vessels was required .the most. Another inference which emerges out of the cases of his early, and equally successful, exploits was that he must have purposefully avoided a pitched battle with his enemies in the open/deep sea. He must have chosen to operate in the area within the sight of his coastal forts and guns so that in case of danger his vessels could always make good their escape in the numerous shallow bays and creeks. In the absence of any document appraising us about the strategy and tactics involved in the early naval activities, these inferences can, at best, serve as general-assumptions keeping in mind the nature of warfare practiced by the Marathas in general (to overcome their own limitations whatsoever).

(A) HIGHLIGHTS OF KANHOJI ANGRE'S ENCOUNTERS WITH THE *SIDDI* OF JANJIRA - The *Siddi* invasion on Bombay in the year 1689-90 had proved that they could achieve quite a lot in the oceanic matters on the west coast of India provided the monetary and other support from the Mughals continued un-interruptedly. At the same time the whole episode had reconfirmed that the British were still not in a position to ignore or displease the Mughals either at Surat or at Bombay. The English, therefore, had to be content with adopting a friendly attitude towards the Mughal admiral *Siddi* whenever the latter asked for any favour from Bombay. At that point of time, this was the most practical decision taken by the English because the Marathas were not in a position to grant any favours to Bombay as a regular Maratha government had disappeared. With the rise of Kanhoji Angre on the Konkan seaboard the position of Bombay once again became bumpy by the closing years of the 18th century. Kanhoji was competing with the *Siddi* on sea as well as on the land and Bombay was apparently inclined towards the *Siddi*. The English, however, were shrewd enough to officially adopt a neutral posture during the fight between the *Siddi* and the Marathas in the Konkan waters.

After the execution of Sambhaji, the *Siddi* had occupied the Maratha strongholds of Raigad, Dabhol, and Ratnagiri etc. which were awarded to him by the Mughal emperor. Through his military expeditions, he had further occupied Revas, Thal and Anjanwel from where he harassed Maratha ships and sent raiding parties inside the Maratha territories. During the period of interregnum, the *Siddi* further extended his conquests by occupying the fort of Padmadurg or Kamsa situated at some distance from the *Siddi* stronghold of Janjira. It is said that the *Siddi* sent the golden key of the fort to the Mughal emperor in 1710 for which the latter privileged him by sending him the robe of honour.[180] The *Siddi* is stated to have wrested the fort of Suvarnadurg too from the Marathas, soon after.[181] Riding on the wave of success, the *Siddi* reportedly laid siege to the Maratha coastal fort of Kulaba in March 1701, but was forced to retreat with great loss. He accused the English of helping the Marathas with ammunition.[182] It was probably because of the *Siddi* invasion that Kanhoji decided to re-strengthen the defenses of Kulaba, his naval headquarters. Kanhoji Angre, immediately surfaced near Bombay with his fleet, however no battles were fought between them. On the contrary, Kanhoji could forge a peaceful understanding with Bombay in the year 1703. As per the English records, both the parties agreed for a 'mutual restitution of boats, goods and prisoners'.[183]

The political situation in the Deccan changed noticeably in the period following the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. Shahuji was released by the Mughals and he projected his claim as the legitimate ruler of the Deccan. The Mughal Empire was also unstable because of the court factions and internal strife. The position of the *Siddi* was not as secure as it was a couple of years ago. His channels of communications with the Mughal emperor were broken. Under such a situation, the *Siddi* thought it prudent to side with Bombay for all practical purposes. It is explicable that the *Siddi* had also arrived at some sort of conformity with Kanhoji Angre too, regarding the exercise of power over the Konkan waters and the control of some coastal possessions.

On the other hand, the position of Kanhoji Angre was greatly exalted as he signed the Treaty of Allegiance with Shahu's representative, the Peshwa in the year 1713. "The consequences of the treaty", writes Khobrekar, "are of great importance. It involved Shahu Chhatrapati and the Maratha state in the conflicts between Kanhoji and his enemies – the *Siddi*, the English and the Portuguese."[184] No sooner than this treaty was signed, a joint military expedition was undertaken by the Maratha Peshwa Balaji Viswanath and Kanhoji Angre against the *Siddi*. The *Siddi* possession on the main land was targeted and hard pressed. Finding no hope of help from any quarters, the *Siddi* - Surul Khan, applied for peace and was obliged to sign a treaty with the Marathas on 30th of January 1715.[185] As per the terms of the treaty, the *Siddi* reluctantly relinquished his control over a few forts which also included some in the coastal area.[186] In this way this treaty gave an upper hand to the Marathas in the affairs of the Konkan and naturally strengthened the position of Kanhoji Angre with respect of the *Siddi*. The *Siddi* was humbled and remained dormant for the next 10 years or so in the affairs of the Konkan as we do not come across any major naval engagement between the *Siddi* and the Angres during this period.[187] The usual minor skirmishes, including the pillaging and looting activities erupted from time to time. The peace with *Siddi* came as a welcome relief for Kanhoji Angre as he could concentrate and channelise his energy against his European detractors. It is interesting to note that in the decade following the peace pact between the Marathas and the *Siddi*, as many as four determined attempts were made by the English and Portuguese on the various strongholds of Kanhoji. The British attacked Vijaydurg (Gheria) twice; Khanderi was also attacked by them; a joint Anglo-Portuguese expedition was undertaken to reduce the Angre stronghold of Kulaba. But, none of them could accomplish the desired objective. The fame of Kanhoji Angre's invincibility was gaining currency very fast.

Siddi had been a mute spectator in all these events and his fear on the sea was practically fading away from the memories of the Konkan people. To add to his misery, the *Siddi*'s position further suffered (in theoretical terms) on account of the grant of the right to collect *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* of the Deccan to the Marathas by the Mughals in 1719. The grant of these rights implied that the Marathas had become the de-facto rulers of the Deccan area and that the Mughal claim over the Konkan ceased to exist.[188] Hence, nothing was happening the way the *Siddi* wanted them to happen. The overall situation appeared gloomy for him and he was getting impatient to re-establish his authority and fame by any means. The *Siddi* needed to act fast before the situation turned hopeless. He could hear the death-knell for his authority in the Deccan and on the Konkan waters too. He was waiting for the opportune moment to strike at the Maratha territory.

The rupture with the Angre seems to have occurred in the year 1722 and the *Siddi* was taking aim at Kanhoji's possessions on the coast and elsewhere. Kanhoji was fully aware of the difficulties of fighting on two fronts simultaneously. Hence, as the British sources would make us believe, he solicited for King Shahu's meditations with the English at Bombay.[189] The process of negotiations allowed Kanhoji the breathing time so that he could attend to the *Siddi* challenge. The *Siddi* was equally calculative. He had also maintained amicable relations with the English and wanted to utilize their good office and support at the opportune moment. The British did acknowledge this in their internal correspondences. One such letter reads, "The *Siddi*...has at sundry times sent off, to our vessels, provisions and refreshments ...and been otherwise very courteous in his advices in relation to Angria..."[190] Bombay had always kept in mind the 'functional utility' of the *Siddi* vis-à-vis the Marathas. The *Siddi* could be gainfully utilized to keep a check on the threat to Bombay originating from the Maratha side, and even to neutralize it. Hence the *Siddi* enjoyed the hospitality of Bombay[191] and was high in confidence. In fact not only the English or Portuguese, but all those powers that had enmity with the Marathas, were trying to make use of the *Siddi* in the best possible way to offset the Maratha threats. For example, the Nizam of Hyderabad was also found courting the *Siddi* when the former was hard pressed because of the Maratha incursions in the Karnataka region.[192]

In 1724, the emboldened *Siddi* Yakut Khan made a determined attempt on Kulaba nd laid siege to this fort by placing armed ships around it. He is said to have put into ervice 12 *palas*, 2 frigates (galvats) and a hundred other armed ships. Kanhoji, however, ad some other plans at hand. He, therefore, is said to have made a deal with the *Siddi* by ffering him a large amount of money.[193] For some times the problem was averted, but he Maratha-*Siddi* relations deteriorated soon afterwards. The *Siddi*-Angre relations urther worsened because of the infamous 'elephant episode' and both the side committed trocities against each other. As fallout of this event, Kanhoji Angre had also managed to onvince Shahuji to initiate a joint military expedition against the *Siddi*. The Chhatrapati ccordingly sent his Pratinidhi with a military contingent to the Konkan. But before doing o steps were taken to ensure that the Portuguese could not influence the outcome of the var by secretly helping the *Siddi* with men and materials.[194] This expedition of the arathas, however, could not bring the desired result. Kanhoji Angre also died in the neanwhile, which further encouraged the *Siddi* to regain his position in the Konkan. The eshwa, however, in collaboration with the successors of Kanhoji Angre, took the field ersonally and the *Siddi* was brought to task in 1733.

(B) KANHOJI ANGRE, THE PORTUGUESE AND THE BRITISH - The seat of uthority of the British Company on the western coast of India was temporarily shifted to urat in the wake of the *Siddi* invasion of Bombay in 1689. However, in 1692, Bombay vas again made the chief seat of government with the orders to repair and increase the ortifications of the island. The war with the Mughals had taught the English Company an mportant lesson. They needed to refrain from open warfare with the native powers. At he same time, so far as possible, amicable relations were to be maintained with the ughals as well as the Marathas. The Company also decided to pursue a strictly peaceful olicy, and revive trade which had been the biggest casualty because of the war. Apart rom the fortifications, the naval strength under the command of the Bombay Island was nhanced so that its safety requirements could be met. Moreover, the Company was also oping up with its trading rivals from England in the Indian waters. Hence it could not fford to get involved with any Indian rulers in the dying years of the 17th century.

On the other hand, Kanhoji Angre had consolidated his position in the Konkan in the last decade of the 17th century. He had grown confident of his capacity on the Konkan water ever since he was elevated to the position of the Maratha Admiral in the year 1698. The company had fortunately adopted somewhat neutral approach towards the Angre-*Siddi* conflict. It seems that Kanhoji did not meddle with the Company's vessels initially. But as the size of his ships grew, he grew bolder and from 1702, his doings began to excite the Company's apprehensions. Kanhoji started making prize of the English vessels not carrying his pass. Though, in December 1703, an understanding was arrived at between the two parties and a mutual restitution of boats, goods, and prisoners followed.[195] However, peace did not last long and late in 1704, one Mr. Reynolds was deputed to find him and tell him that he could not be permitted searching, molesting, or seizing vessels in Bombay waters: to which he returned a defiant answer, that 'he had done many benefits to the English, who had broken faith with him, and that the Marathas had successfully resisted the Mughals for 40 years; and that now as they lived by their sword they would seize boats belonging to the Mughal emperor or to any of his ports or to the Malabar coast, unless they carried Angrian pass'.[196]

As per the Portuguese sources, even by the year 1707, Kanhoji had 'only eight or ten armed ships'.[197] However, even with those vessels Kanhoji could make daring attacks on the European shipping. In 1707, his vessels reportedly attacked one of the English Company's ships, the *Bombay* frigate, and blew it up after a brief engagement. This was also the year of Aurangzeb's death which was followed by a chaos in the Mughal system. Kanhoji took advantage of the situation and it is said that in 1710 he made an attempt on the fort of Khanderi which was actually being held (by the Marathas) in the name of the Maratha King. In the contemporary English documents it is mentioned that 'Khanderi belonged to the Maratha Raja who was at peace with Bombay.[198] It is also mentioned in the British records that in September 1703, the Portuguese had leased the island of Elephanta (to the Marathas) for a payment of 700 Xeraphins per year.[199] This must have been a cause of concern to the Bombay authorities; and Kanhoji's seizure of the island of Khanderi must have proved their worst nightmares true. On the other hand Kanhoji's action on Khanderi could be understood in the light of naval strategy. He seems to be working on the idea of a chain of island forts near his headquarters at Kulaba. No doubt, having such strategically located forts under his control would have greatly contributed to the offensive-defensive capabilities of his naval fleet.[200] In 1712 Kanhoji's vessels made a bold raid on the armed yacht of the Governor of Bombay, together with the *Anne* Ketch from Karwar. A month later two English ships (on voyage from London to India) were attacked near the coast of Goa by a Ghurab and a Galvat of Kanhoji's fleet. The Portuguese were also not spared; it is reported that the fleet of Kanhoji Angre had captured the greater part of a Portuguese '*armado*', and disabled a thirty-gun man-of-war that was conveying it. Following this audacious action of Kanhoji, the Portuguese authorities of Goa approached the English at Bombay for the purpose of a joint attack on Angre. It is interesting to note that the Bombay Governor Aislabie not only rejected the Portuguese proposal but, on the contrary, signed peace with Kanhoji when approached by the latter.[201]

By applying for peace with the British, Kanhoji acted like a shrewd statesman. He knew that peace was the need of the situation in Konkan. He had to act judiciously and speedily in view of the Maratha civil war between Shahu and Tarabai. Tarabai had almost lost, and Kanhoji was faced with a military action on land led by the Peshwa of Shahu. Kanhoji could not have fought on two fronts effectively. Hence, before the English could join hands with the Portuguese against him, he proposed peace. Kanhoji, however, was shrewd enough not to sign or commit anything so quickly. He kept on prolonging the discussions with the English either with additional demands, viz. for being supplied with powder and shots (by the English) on payment,[202] or regarding the restitution of prisoners, goods etc. In other words he bought time, and utilized this time to negotiate with the Peshwa of Shahuji. Eventually, Kanhoji Angre gained significantly by switching over his loyalty from Tarabai to Chhatrapati Shahuji. Kanhoji, hence was in a much strong position than ever before as a result of this understanding with Shahuji. He was given the control of the maritime forts like Khanderi, Kulaba, Vijaydurg, Suvarnadurg and Jaigad in addition to the coastal forts surrounding them like the forts of Devgad, Kanakdurg, Fattehdurg, Govagad, Yashwantgad etc.[203] He was free from any threat to his coastal/landed possessions as the Peshwa, also his old friend, was there to take care. Kanhoji, therefore, could devote his time and energy to project the Maratha sovereignty and exert the Maratha power on the sea in the right perspective.

In the meanwhile, Charles Boone had taken command as the new governor of Bombay in 1715. By that time Kanhoji had consolidated his authority as the Maratha Admiral. He was trying to enforce regulations regarding the matters of navigation and projection of power on the Konkan waters which suited the Maratha interests the best. Boone, on the other hand, had come with a definite agenda to improve the Company's administration and trading fortunes. After having assessed the prevailing conditions, he immediately worked upon the improvement of the defenses of Bombay. The fortifications of the island were strengthened and orders were placed to construct armed vessels for the defense of Bombay. He had heard about the shrewdness of Kanhoji Angre, and when he came across the Maratha admiral in person, the English-Angre tussle started. The English, at times in league with the Portuguese, made repeated attempts to dislodge Kanhoji Angre from his advantageous position in the Konkan waters. The English were the first to break away from the practiced norms. During the governorship of Boone, they attacked Vijaydurg and Khanderi, the two strongholds of the Maratha admiral. However, as they failed to evict Kanhoji from these forts, they cajoled the Portuguese to be a part of a joint military expedition on Kulaba, another stronghold Kanhoji Angre, which also served as the headquarters of Maratha naval establishment. By that time, the Portuguese, somehow, had also realized that Kanhoji needed to be dealt with firmly in the interest of the Portuguese settlements on the Konkan coast. The Viceroy of Goa, Conde de Ericeria is said to have admitted thus in 1720, "Kanhoji Angre became powerful because of the negligence on the part of the Portuguese..." The estimated naval strength of Kanhoji as projected by the Portuguese in 1721 was '6 *Palas* with 16 to 18 canons fitted on them, 30 galvates and 6000 sailors'.[204] This estimate of men and vessels was definitely far less than the potential strength of Kanhoji. Anyway, till his death in 1729, Kanhoji not only practiced navigation on his own terms, but also compelled the Europeans as well as the *Siddi* to acknowledge his authority over the Konkan waters. Let us now have a brief overview of the European attempts on the strongholds of Kanhoji Angre and study their relation with regards to the naval strategy, tactics and even limitations experienced by the parties involved.

(C) BRITISH ATTEMPT ON VIJAYDURG (GHERIA) (MAY-JUNE, 1718) - Charles Boone's decision to attack Vijaydurg seems to have been hastened by the unprovoked acts of hostilities committed by the vessels of Kanhoji Angre of late. In the beginning of 1716, he had made prize of a company's boat in sight of Bombay harbour, and of another belonging to a private merchant. Four private ships from Mahim, valued at 30,000 Xeraphins (as per Portuguese estimates) were also captured by him on the pretext that the Company was passing them off as English ships, whereas they were meant for private business.[205] To add to the English anguish, Kanhoji Angre's ships trading with Bombay often refused to pay harbour dues.[206] On being asked to explain the 'piratical acts', Kanhoji not only sent defiant replies but also retaliated by capturing more English ships namely *Otter* and *Anne*.[207] The crisis was further precipitated when in December 1717 Kanhoji's vessels forcibly took one of the Company's boats carrying timber into Kulaba and removed timber pieces from it. "The removal of timber", writes Malgaonkar, "gave the Bombay Council cause for far more anger than the capture of their ships and the English passengers. For this time, the vessel carrying the timber did in fact belong to the Company and as such, Kanhoji Angre could not claim that she was an Indian ship trying to pass off as an Indian ship."[208] Such actions of Kanhoji Angre had left the Company's administrators with limited choice.

However, Bombay did not take any immediate action as it was not in a position to finance and wage a naval war.[209] Moreover, before striking at Angre's strongholds Boone wanted to have the Portuguese on his side, but the Portuguese governor expressed his inability to do so in view of the threat of the pirates from Muscat.[210] The Bombay council, in the meanwhile met repeatedly to decide on the course of action to be taken against Kanhoji Angre. By April 1718 the Bombay council had come to the conclusion that mere skirmishes with Angre's ships and the plundering of a few coastal villages was not likely to bring about the desired result, hence it resolved to take a direct military action against Kanhoji Angre and his naval bases. It was decided that a naval expedition against the Angre stronghold of Vijaydurg would be undertaken in the month of May-June the same year. Boone, ever since his arrival in India, had consistently worked upon to improve the fighting strength of the Bombay fleet. As Biddulph John puts in, "within a few months of his arrival, the '*Britannia*' (with eighteen guns), built at Karwar; the

'*Fame*' (with sixteen guns), built at Surat; and '*Revenge*' (with sixteen guns), built at Bombay; were flying the Company's flag... A few months later, the '*Victory*' (with twenty four guns), was launched, and two years after his arrival, Boone had at his disposal a fine fleet consisting of nineteen frigates, ghurabs, ketches, galvats, and rowing galleys, carrying two hundred twenty guns, besides a bomb vessel and a fire-ship..."[211] At the same time, Biddulph's sarcasm could not be concealed when he describes the preparations made by Boone to tackle Kanhoji Angre and others 'pirates'. He writes, "It was easier to build ships than to get sailors to man them, in view of the miserable pay given by the Company, and the attractions of service under native chiefs. Many of the crews were foreigners, who were ready enough to take service under the Angre, if the inclinations took them, and the bulk of the crews were Indian lascars."[212]

The reasons for selecting the coastal fort of Vijaydurg as the target of the British attack were too obvious. With the advantages of its strategic natural location, this fort housed all the facilities of ship-building and maintenance of the fleet. In other words this fort served as the main depot of the Maratha naval establishment where a large number of vessels were hauled up ashore each rainy season. In fact, the recently captured English ships viz. the '*Success*', '*Otter*', '*Robert*', and others were also detained at the very same fort.[213] Boon's idea was, therefore, to destroy the fort along with the vessels, stores and other facilities. The month of May-June was deliberately chosen to deliver the offensive because, by that time the monsoon would have almost set in, and under normal circumstances sea-borne activities were avoided during that season.[214] Moreover, as per the usual practice followed by the Marathas, the soldiers would also be allowed to proceed on leave and engage in agricultural and other productive activities at their native places. Hence, conventionally, the rainy season was the lean season for the Marathas from military point of view. On the other hand, by undertaking such a venture during that part of the year, Boone, in military terminology, wanted to surprise the enemy completely. He was shrewd enough to wait till the time he was convinced that most of the Maratha ships had made their way back to the shores of Vijaydurg for annual wintering.

A critical analysis of the methods adopted to achieve the desired ends in this expedition makes it obvious that in Boone's scheme, three things were to play the most determining role. The first element was the use of fire (since the entire depot/harbour was to be set on fire so that all the Maratha vessels were burnt); the second was the actual landing of the English marines on the coast so as to take physical possession of the fort, and the third was the 'maintenance of surprise' as a general principle of warfare. The Company's Chief Engineer, Major Vane, 'had tried out all the mortars and grenade-launchers before they were fitted on the ships and had sent up the requisite quantities of ammunition on board... the fire ship was inspected and pronounced perfect.'[215] A reasonably large number of troops were readied to effect landing on the coast and fight for the fort.[216] As regards the element of surprise, Boone wanted to take advantage of the distance separating Vijaydurg from the two other prime forts of Angre, namely – Kulaba and Sindhudurg. Boone must have wanted to accomplish his task before any help from Angre could reach Vijaydurg. It is not unexpected, therefore, to find that the Bombay council declared a war on Kanhoji Angre only after a week or so had elapsed from the time when the Company's ships had sailed out (of Bombay) for Vijaydurg. "By that time", as Malgaonkar writes, "according to planning, the attack on Gheria was already scheduled to be completed."[217]

A first hand account of the Gheria expedition is given by Alexander Downing who had also taken part in this expedition. As per his accounts, the following picture emerges.

1) The English ships were taken near the fort and up to the harbour in a line formation (the best defensive position in a naval engagement) with the intent of blocking up all the exit points from the harbour. From there a continuous cannonading was started to make a breach in the walls, so as to storm the castle. The shelling was done incessantly for two days, but it was found that 'the place was impregnable'. Next, the ships with men were taken closer to the fort so as to storm the walls. But it was found that the castle walls were so high that 'our scaling ladders would not reach near the top of them...' Downing gives the impression that the estimates about the strength and accessibility of the fort fell quite short of mark. This compelled the English to adopt another strategy even though it was risky after the failure to reduce the fort by cannonading. The next courses of action consisted of making a landing on the shore and then try to storm the fort by sheer force of numbers.

2) While the efforts were being made to batter the walls of Vijaydurg, a simultaneous endeavour was made by the British fire-ship to reach near the pile of the ships of Kanhoji Angre, most of which were hauled up ashore or properly fastened to each other in the harbour in view of the ensuing monsoon. The idea was to set fire a few of them, so that the fire spreads to the piles of vessels kept together.[218] The planning of Boone seemed to be perfect and he waited till the time it was almost the onset of the monsoon so that maximum damage could be done to the vessels of Kanhoji's fleet. However, Boone seems to have either underestimated the Marathas, or had no ideas, whatsoever, about their methods of providing safety and shelter for the wintering vessels. The Marathas, on the other hand, proved to be too meticulous as regards their bulwark to deal with any unexpected situation during the monsoon. Downing writes, "We endeavoured to get the fire-ship in, but could not; for on the east part of the fort, they had a cove or creek, where they had laid up a great part of their fleet, and had a strong boom across the same; so that we can not annoy them otherwise than by throwing our bombs and coehorns very thick into the garrison, which we did for a considerable time..." In this way the fire-ship was rendered ineffective owing to normal defensive measures. Hence, Boone, who had carefully planned to surprise the Marathas, was himself completely taken by surprise. His plan had misfired and he had to look for some other alternatives to get the better out of the Marathas.

3) Since a naval war with the Marathas was out of question, the next, and the only choice lying before the English was to try an amphibious assault on the fort. But, for that, landing of troops on the shore was a pre-requisite. The British armada had carried sufficient number of men for this purpose. The only consideration was to find a suitable place to land at the base of the fort which was full of submerged rocks. The knowledge of the tidal pattern/timing could have come handy to undertake such a task. There also existed the danger of a counter offensive from the fort either in the form of gun-fire or sudden dashes of military contingent to foil their attempt to come anywhere near the fort. The landing was accordingly made, though not of the entire marine force, but only a fraction of them. Hence, a clash for the physical occupation can be ruled out, from the British point of view. The plan, as it appeared now, was to skirt around the walls of the fort and to somehow reach the cove where the Maratha vessels were clustered together. It

is interesting to note that there was apparently no resistance from the sentinels and the fort guards of Vijaydurg when the landing was made or even when the British marines were skirting around the walls of the forts. One of the probable reasons, as we have noted earlier, may be inadequate garrison strength owing to the rainy season. Another and more probable reason appears to be the confidence about their defensive preparations. The accounts of Downing further helps to substantiate these theories. He writes, "After the second day (of firing on the fort walls) we landed our forces, taking the opportunity of the tide... We got them all on shore, and marched up the country, without molestation; only now and then the castle would let fly a shot or two, which did us small damage. We attempted to march the army down to their shipping and to set them on fire; but when we came within a mile of the place, the land was swampy, and so very muddy by the spring tide flowing over that we could not proceed. On our retreat, they galled us very much by firing from the castle... we drew off our forces and went up to Bombay to repair our frigates and take care of our wounded men, of whom we had a considerable number."

The entire exercise to reduce Kanhoji's stronghold of Vijaydurg thus failed miserably. Boone and the Bombay council were proved impractical in their planning as they could not get through even the simplest of the defensive preparations of the Marathas. On the top of that the English casualties were quite high even though there was no counter-offensive measure taken by the Marathas. But Governor Boone was impervious. He quickly planned another action on Kanhoji; this time the target was the island fortress of Khanderi which commanded the passage to the Bombay harbour.

(D) BRITISH ACTION ON KHANDERI (NOVEMBER, 1718) - After a careful examination of the circumstances under which the Khanderi expedition was undertaken (including the nature and timing of the expedition), one is compelled to reason that Boone had planned the Khanderi expedition as supplementary to the Gheria expedition, and that both expeditions were conceived together. In fact, the Khanderi expedition could be seen as a sequel to the Gheria expedition. While Gheria expedition was commenced just when the monsoon was to set in, that of the Khanderi was initiated immediately after the rains had stopped. The entire duration of monsoon, it seems, was utilized by Boone to give a final shape to the planning and preparations. Emissaries were also sent to the

Portuguese as well as the King Sambhaji of Kolhapur to form an alliance against Kanhoji Angre. Though, the Portuguese avoided any commitment on this matter citing a 'smooth state of affairs' with Kanhoji, the King of Kolhapur responded in affirmative.[219] The latter, however, could not have contributed even in the remotest way to this expedition. In the meanwhile, Bombay had been feeling confident about its military strength and fighting capabilities. By the end of September, 300 more soldiers had arrived from England, and they brought with them large quantities of war-like stores and ammunitions.[220] Bombay had many gun and bomb ships of various sizes ready to participate in the action Malgaonkar and Biddulph have given a detailed list of these vessels (which could be called the 'standing navy' of the East India Company at Bombay). We are provided with some additional information regarding the organization and formation of the British naval force on the eve of the Khanderi expedition. It is believed that 'every one of these ships had two or more galvats as their permanent auxiliary vessels, and each galvat held ten English sailors and forty to fifty Indian sailors. The bigger ships held as many as 200 men, out of whom about forty to fifty were English sailors. The total manpower of the fleet in officers and other ranks was upwards of 2,000 and this did not include the marines or the landing parties.'[221]

On the 1st of November 1718, the whole squadron of ships from Bombay sailed for Khanderi. The very next day they anchored off Khanderi bringing about a near siege of the Maratha island fortress. The entry/exit approaches to the Khanderi harbour were also blocked. A relentless bombing over the fort, particularly its southernmost part which was duly strengthened by Kanhoji Angre a couple of years ago through additional fortification works, was carried out by the bomb-ships of Bombay. However, it was found that the bombs were falling short of mark as the bomb-ships did not venture too close to the fort for fear of submerged rocks[222] and also because of the fright of the fort guns which might have retaliated once the ships moved within the range of the guns.

First engagement: While the English cannonading on the fort was on, Kanhoji came up with the retaliatory assault in a tactical manner. He sent two of his ghurabs to lure the English ships. At the sight of the enemy ships coming out of the harbour, Boone, who was commanding the operation in person, signalled the frigates - Victory and Revenge - along with the ketch Hawke, to attack them. But, as it was found that the two

Angre ghurabs were closely followed and supported by fourteen galvats, Boone ordered his ships to disengage. This minor skirmish between the two navies brought different results to both the sides. For Kanhoji, he seems to have succeeded in his motive if it was to lure the English vessels to the range of the fort guns. It is reported that one of the attacking ships suffered 'slight damage' caused from the fort guns. It may also be assumed that Kanhoji would have wanted to relieve the pressure of bombardment on the southern part of the fort and for that he must have sent his ghurabs and galvats so that the enemy attention was diverted. Kanhoji succeeded in this bait too. On the other hand, the British would have seen this action as an attempt by Angre's vessels to pierce through the naval blockade so that ammunitions and other necessities required (by the fort) to withstand the siege should be brought in. The English had every reason to feel happy as they had apparently foiled the enemy's attempt to do so. However, a clever strategist should always bear in mind that ammunitions and essentials would not fall short on the very first day of a fort which was cut off from the mainland and was also playing the role of a base at a strategic location. On the contrary, it conveys a bad impression about the ability of Boone to handle the situation. The most intriguing aspect of the whole episode is the decision of Boone to disengage without even engaging the enemy ships despite having the numerical and technical superiority. This suggests that Boone was not willing to risk his ships through a head-on naval action with the enemy. This further leads us to believe that Kanhoji's fleet and armoury, if not better, were, at least, equally effective with respect to the British fleet. Kanhoji should also be credited as his ships did not venture out of the striking range of its own fort.

Anyway, under such circumstances, as a naval engagement with the enemy was 'ruled out', Boone concentrated on the last option[223] which consisted of landing his men on the island so that the fort could be stormed through. The English rowing boats were given the task to circumnavigate the island and choose appropriate landing site. After the investigation of the island was complete, Boone came up with the idea of landing his troops at two different places, on the east and on the western sides of the island respectively. To engage an enemy, adopting defensive posture, on two different fronts was, in fact, a superior strategy, for which Boone must be given the due credit. This decision was taken in keeping in mind the direction of the wind too. Downing writes, "It was finally arranged that the soldiers (marines) and the grenadiers should land to windward,[224] while the sepoys,[225] covered by the fire of ghurabs and galvats, should land at the opposite side of the island, to leeward."[226] Since the frequency of the return fire from the fort had also dropped down, it was decided to carry out landing at the earliest.[227]

Unfortunately on the 5th of November, when the landing was to take effect, the chosen soldiers, who were to land on the leeward side, declined to land despite repeated persuasions and announcement of rich rewards. This was indeed a setback for Boone's plan of action, but he could have done little under such circumstances. However, the grenadiers and marines landed on the scheduled spot, much to the relief of Boone. But, a steady array of fire from the garrison of the fort prevented them from making any further progress, and they were beaten back with the casualty figure of 18 killed and 50 wounded. It is interesting to note that this casualty resulted 'more by force of stones hoven from the rocks than fire arms'. In the melee, an accidental burst of gun on one of the ships providing support fire to the landing party, compounded the confusion and the landing party quickly got away from the island fort. Unfazed by the setback, Boone planned another (second) landing at Khanderi. This time, at the eastern part i.e., at the harbour only, since all attempts to motivate and convince the Company's sepoys failed.[228] It is reported that in spite of the promises of rich rewards, only forty (out of estimated 2000) of them came forward as volunteers. The grenadiers and the marines, along with the 'volunteers' were again pressed into act. The date of the landing was fixed for the 7th of November. In view of this, the British bomb-ships began the support fire since morning.

As the landing party approached near the island and attempted landing, it was found that 'a strong (tidal) current prevented disembarkation, and the boats were forced to lie off under a heavy fire, until the tide changed'. It is said that two of the English ships under the command of one Manuel de Castro, a deserter from the navy of Kanhoji Angre, tried to rush towards the shore but had to return back with heavy casualty.[229] At 10 O'clock the boats pulled for the landing-place once again; but 'the tide was still running so strongly' that they were thrown into confusion, and many of the attacking party never landed at all.[230] Yet, Boone was not disheartened, and despite the obvious impediments (tidal current as well as the continuous fire shots from the fort), he ordered his men to land. The landing party quickly ran toward the gate of the fort, braving the shower of shots and stones. They rushed into batches and applied relentless pressure on the gate. Reportedly, an officer by the name of John Steele, 'with his axe hewed at the gate, nearly effected an entrance, when the cowardice of two other officers, caused the attack to miscarry. One of them dropped down his sword, while the other came up to the gate and fired his pistol; but the bullet rebounded and struck him on the nose; upon which he ordered the drums to beat a retreat, and the soldiers got back to the boats...'

Boone's fight for Khanderi was over,[231] though a desultory bombardment continued for some days, and some shots were fired against Kulaba too. On the 14th, Boone returned to Bombay, 'seeing that nothing could be effected', and, on the 24th the whole English squadron made sail for Bombay, 'after exhausting all their ammunition'. Much to relief of the besieged garrison, the blockade of Khanderi was thus finally over. Apprehensive of a fresh attack in the following year, Kanhoji opened channels of negotiations for a treaty of peace, through the good office of the Maratha sovereign Shahuji. This proved to be a good tactical ploy, for Kanhoji got the much needed relief to concentrate more on his defenses and striking capabilities. It should be remembered here that in military matters, the concept of peace does not exist; for peace is the time utilized to prepare well for the next war.

As per the English accounts, treachery and cowardice of the officers and soldiers appear to be the main reasons attributed to the failure of the Khanderi expedition. In the first instance, Manuel de Castro, was accused of treachery and was charged for being in league with Kanhoji. He was alleged to have allowed some of the Maratha vessels to slip through the Khanderi naval blockade (which he was reportedly looking after) and bring back the ammunitions and other necessary supplies for the fort. In the second, Rama Kamathi, a rich merchant of Bombay was also charged with conspiracy against the Bombay government.[232] The cowardice of officers and soldiers has been highlighted while dealing with the course of action. The reason for lifting of the naval blockade after the culmination of the offensive on Khanderi has been ascribed to 'the appearance of the Angre's fleet from Vijaydurg, which had Bombay for a time at its mercy'. It was reported that Angre's ships 'now lay off the (Bombay) harbour, making it difficult for trading vessels to go in or out. Three times the '*Morrice*' got under way, and three times had to return, before she could start on her return voyage to Europe...'[233]

A critical analysis of the entire episode in the Khanderi waters point towards a few valuable lessons learnt from the military point of view. Khanderi was fought as a defensive war from the point of view of the Marathas.

1) A naval blockade was brought about by the British to prevent any attempts by the Marathas to bring in the necessary supplies, whatsoever, for the garrison. Still, the British did not persist with the blockade, apparently for two reasons: (i) They were not sure that they would be in a position to prevent small Maratha vessels from bringing supplies to the island fortress.[234] (ii) They were anticipating retaliation from a Maratha squadron from Kulaba or Vijaydurg; hence they had to finish their expedition as soon as possible. In this way, a prolonged naval blockade of the fort was out of question.

2) The British had the advantage of superiority of numbers (concentration of force) as well as technology. They had put into use nearly a hundred odd vessels of different capabilities to reduce this small island fortress. As compared to nearly 2000 of the Company's fighters, the garrison strength of fort must not have been more than 1/4th of this. The fort guns indeed kept the English bomb-ships at bay, thereby preventing any significant damage to the fortifications. At the same time, the garrison could watch the enemy landing movements and could have taken counteractive measures, viz. directing the fire of the guns etc. towards the critical points. Had there been simultaneous landing on two different locations there would have been some different story to tell. But, that is what is called motivation and devotion to the cause a soldier is involved with. Kanhoji's men were highly motivated under their commander Mankoji Suryavanshi whereas the story on the British side is the tale of corrupt, coward, inexperienced officers; and of soldiers who were more interested in their own fortunes rather than the cause.

3) Surprise, as an element of warfare, was used by the Marathas in this war to achieve the best result. It could be gathered from the British description of the expedition that the decision to land on the island was facilitated by the observation and the following conclusion that the Marathas faced severe shortage of ammunitions as the rate of return fire from the fort was quite insignificant. Even during the storming operation of the British troops during their first landing, more than gun shots, they faced stones which

were being hurled on them by the defenders of the fort near the gate. During the second landing, however, the fort guns started firing at a brisk pace, the impact of which was 'more demoralizing to the enemy than the actual damage caused by the guns'. During this time itself the besieged garrison charged out of the fort and launched such a fierce counter-attack that the English were not left with any courage to make another landing. In this way, the defense of Khanderi could be likened with a brilliant tactical victory for which the defending garrison must be given full credit a they made up a case of inferior troops (in numbers) with inferior resources.

(E) SECOND ATTACK ON VIJAYDURG (SEPT-OCT, 1720) - In January 1719, an envoy form Shahuji had been deputed to Bombay to hold peace talks with Boone. While the talks were going on, both the sides exercised utmost restraint and avoided a path of collision between them. But the talks continued for long as the peace terms were being negotiated before being finalized. Boone was a shrewd administrator. Though he gave peace a chance, he seemed to be unsure of the implementation of the terms particularly from the side of the Marathas (Kanhoji Angre). Boone had, therefore, kept the other options open. In the first instance, he had started preparing for another showdown with Kanhoji Angre. It seems Siddi was also to be included in this campaign, but, for that, Bombay apprehended that Siddi would ask for money as well as a firm direction from the Mughals to do so.[235] Bombay had embarked upon a very ambitious project of constructing a 'floating castle'. It was called the '*Phram*'. It was designed with shot-proof sides to carry twelve 48-pounder guns. In other words, it was conceived as a floating battery.[236] In the meanwhile, the Company's headquarters at London had sanctioned a sixty-gun ship *St. George* to be committed to the safety of Bombay harbour. By that time the construction of the protection walls around Bombay were also almost complete. To further strengthen his position against Kanhoji Angre, Boone tried to make common cause with the enemies of Angre. Boone was constantly in touch with the *Siddi*, and by sending him 'expensive presents' he was keeping him in good humour. Similarly, Boone also made repeated overtures to the Portuguese, but the Portuguese Viceroy did not seem enthusiastic about any alliance with the British which was, by nature, anti-Maratha. Boone also kept busy as he had ordered the construction of different types of war-vessels to be used in his up-coming venture against Kanhoji Angre. Prospects of any peaceful settlement with the Maratha Admiral being very faint by the beginning of 1720, Boone concentrated on the second attempt on Vijaydurg.

By the time monsoon receded, Boone's fleet for the expedition (destination kept secret till that time) consisted of the following vessels: '*London*' (fitted with 40 guns), which acted as the flag-ship, '*Victory*' (fitted with 26 guns) – a frigate, '*Revenge*' (fitted with 18 guns) and '*Defiance*' (fitted with 16 guns) – ghurabs, '*Hunter*' – a galley, two galivats, a bomb ketch by the name '*Terrible Bomb*', a fire-ship, and a number of fishing boats for landing troops. The troops for the expedition consisted of 350 soldiers and *topasses* and 80 chosen sepoys. In addition, some 2000 odd sailors, constituting the crew of the fleet, were also expected to facilitate and participate in the landing.[237] Given, the number of the troops earmarked for the expedition, it is doubtful whether the English planed to take any of the strongholds of Kanhoji Angre on the coast through a direct/storming action. Kanhoji, on the other hand, in view of the stepped up preparations of the British, quite anticipated a determined British action on his possessions. However, he was unsure about the point of attack and was in a state of uncertainty. He had, therefore, enhanced the defenses of Kulaba by fortifying the island of Hirakot,[238] which lay across the channel from Kulaba. Kanhoji Angre, unaware of the real intent of the English, kept the commanders of the other marine forts on high alert and waited for the British offensive. He had also requisitioned troops from the Maratha King for the protection of Kulaba. As a result, on the 30th of December, 1720, the Maratha Peshwa Bajirao had stationed cavalry strength of 7000 at Alibag.[239]

On 5th of September, 1720, Boone appointed a committee for the management of the expedition. As the chairman of this committee, Boone, on 10th of September, appointed Mr. Walter Brown, a senior writer in the service of the Company, as the Commander of the operations. On 13th September, 'Admiral' Brown sailed with the Company's squadron to Gheria.

Action for Vijaydurg: On way to Vijaydurg, the strength of the English fleet was to be reinforced with the addition of three vessels namely '*Chandos*', '*Pelham*' and the '*Phram*'.[240] On the 18th, the Bombay fleet laid their anchors opposite to the Vijaydurg fort. After taking position (nearly a mile away from the fort) as per Brown's directions, the fleet started the course of action. A general bombardment of the fort, with a view to reduce it before storming, was undertaken first. But owing to the distance of the bombing vessels from the fort, the whole exercise of bombardment proved futile. The next day, therefore, the bomb-ketch and fire-ships were taken close to the fort and shelling was started again. As the luck would have it, it was discovered that due to faulty construction of the cannon barrels, they could not take sufficient discharge of powder for an effective range of fire. As a result, the shots fell too short of the target. Under such situations, Brown could not have done anything but to wait for the arrival of Boone's prestigious project the *Phram*.

The *Phram* arrived on the 27th and was immediately dedicated to the task. But in the week preceding the arrival of the *Phram*, Brown tried to keep up the pressure on the fort's garrison. On the 22nd, Brown decided to land a small contingent of his troops, led by one Mr. Gordon, on the coast with the assignment to occupy a building like structure on way to the fort. It is said that the other officers on the mission had objected to this particular scheme of Brown by arguing that it would be a folly to make such an attack before the arrival of the whole force. However, Brown persisted with his scheme. The garrison of the fort, on the other hand, monitored the enemy movement closely. After the enemy had made landing, a detachment form the fort swooped down upon them ferociously, and forced them to abandon their position with a heavy casualty. Brown, who was also watching the entire action, had to order two of his ships '*Revenge*' and '*Hunter*' to provide a cover fire to the retreating party so that further casualties at the hands of the garrison of the fort could be avoided. It should be noted that no such cover fire was provided to the landing party at the time of disembarkation. The Maratha garrison, therefore, took full advantage of this tactical folly committed by the British and made a daring attack on the British contingent from close range.

The landing adventure having failed, Brown was up for the next move so that the pressure on the fort was never relaxed. The very next day the bomb ketch was put to use once again, this time from a closer range. The shells missed the target as hopelessly as they did earlier. It was decided then to put off the whole operation till the arrival of the remaining ships of the squadron. But, the naval blockade of the harbour and the fort continued with all the ships strategically positioned near the harbour waters. The logbook of the ship '*London*' provides us with two significant pieces of information of the weeklong period of interregnum till the next course of action was undertaken. The logbook not only records the general story of drunkenness of the crew of the ships, but also records as to how the garrison of the fort utilized this opportunity to strengthen their defenses by erecting batteries. It records, "the boats (of enemy) full of armed men were constantly crossing the river...", but nothing was done to intercept them. The long wait was finally over, and on the 27th the eagerly awaited '*Phram*' along with the '*Chandos*' and '*Pelham*' joined the expedition. The '*Phram*' was immediately deployed to the task of battering the fort. To the annoyance and bewilderment of all, it was discovered that the 'untried machine' would not deliver because of a 'faulty design' of the vessel. It was realized that the gun-ports were cut 'too low' to have allowed the shots to travel far. As a result the shots fell into the water as near as just 20 yards from the vessel. At the same time, the retaliatory fire from the fort prevented any attempt to take the '*Phram*' closer to the fort. Undeterred, Brown immediately sent for the ship's carpenters, who worked to make amends in the designing fault. In this way the momentum of action was lost, once again.

Brown had to devise new moves to make his plan work properly. He was confident that '*Phram*' would soon be joining the thick of the action after the necessary changes were carried out; hence he planned yet another landing to physically assault the fort. Brown announced a reward of rupees forty per head to those who volunteered for landing. As a result some 59 men from the ship '*Chandos*' volunteered along with nearly 180 from the other vessels of the squadron. The landing action was meticulously planned and it was decided that the landing would take place at two different places (for the purpose of distracting the enemy). One group would consist of 340 soldiers under the command of Major Stanton and the other comprising of 239 volunteers under the command of Captain Woodward. On the 29th, the '*Phram*' joined the squadron after undergoing necessary repairs. It was put under the charge of Lieutenant Wise. The action commenced on the same day with the flagship London hovering around to direct the operations.

The '*Phram*' moved strategically closer to the fort and started showering shots on the fort as well as the harbour. The other fire ships of the squadron added to the effect. The return fire from the fort was coming in a good speed. The exchange of fire continued throughout the day with two notable results. In the first, the shots from the English squadron ('*Phram*') were successful in destroying a number of Angre's ships[241] that had sought refuge in the river. The second noticeable event was that, though planned, no landing was attempted or made on the 29th. The landing might have been deferred either because of the heavy shelling from the fort or because of the presence of the Maratha vessels in the harbour as well as in the river. The events of the day convinced Brown that '*Phram*' needed to be more accurate and effective if they wanted to carry out the operations as per a calculated strategy. Hence, Brown instructed the '*Phram*' to move much closer to the fort so that the fort walls could be targeted. The '*Phram*' accordingly moved closer towards the harbour taking cover of the darkness of the night. The firing was renewed the next morning; however, Lieutenant Wise was apparently in an 'inebriated' condition to have taken part in the proceedings. As reported, 'the sailors took it upon themselves to fire the guns, each in their own way'. The nearness of the '*Phram*' to the fort further endangered its safety as the retaliatory fire from the fort began in the morning. Reportedly, two of the shots from the fort fell on the '*Phram*' causing deaths and injuries to the crew on board. The casualties were further appended by the bursting of a gun on board '*Phram*'. The explosion fired the gun on the opposite side of the deck which was loaded with grape and pointing over a boat full of *topasses*. 'The flame from the gun ignited their cartridge boxes, and the poor wretches were terribly scorched and injured.' In the meanwhile, the sustained fire of the other English ships in the inner harbour was successful in destroying a number of Angre's ships that sought refuge in the river; 'one of 500 tons, one of 200 tons, and 10 smaller ones were set on fire and burnt'. This was all the action of the day which had found mention in the entry of the logbook of the flagship '*London*'. By the evening, the 'contented' English squadron made a retreat from the advanced position (the blockade of the harbour, nonetheless continued) and the next few days were spent in resting and repairing the damage suffered by the ships.

"At this critical time when Brown was faced with the dilemma of making another attempt on Vijaydurg or to wind up the expedition", writes Malgaonkar, "an excellent excuse for abandoning the expedition without loss of face presented itself."[242] The Sawant of Wadi, (whose loyalties to the Maratha *Swarajya* were not beyond doubt even during the reign of Shivaji) came up with a proposal of a joint attack on the Angre's territory in collaboration with the English squadron. He promised to commit '5000 infantry and 2000 cavalry' to carry out an attack on Angre's territory provided the English simultaneously attacked the coastal fort of Jaigad, which was some 16 miles southwards to the fort of Gheria. In this way, it could be distinguished that the plan of the Sawant was to engage Angre on two different fronts and to gain the maximum out of the action. The anxiety of Brown could be guessed from the following action: (a) he accepted this plan immediately; (b) he also wrote to Boone and sought permission to execute this plan; (c) he, in anticipation of Boone's concurrence to this plan, dispatched a part of the Company's fleet under his command towards Jaigad on 7th of October. This plan, however, also had to be aborted in the mid-way and the fleet had to be ordered to return to Bombay. The main reason for the ill fate of this plan was the non-availability of the Sawant's troops for the 'joint and simultaneous' action as proposed by him. It is said that the English fleet kept waiting in front of Jaigad fort. Brown reached there in person on the 18th of October only to find that there was no corresponding action from the side of his ally, the Sawant. Still, Brown, probably in the fit of overzealousness, ordered for the commencement of bombardment of the fort of Jaigad. For two consecutive days the bombardment was carried on with no effect on the 'not so strong' fort. Brown's suggestion for a landing there was thoroughly rejected by the other officers. Under such circumstances, realising the futility of the whole purpose, the squadron gave up the action and sailed back for Bombay.[243]

It is interesting to note that before sailing for Jaigad, Brown had made a last effort to convince the officers at Vijaydurg to attempt a fresh landing at the shore to take the fort. However, the officers would not agree to any such proposal despite the best efforts of Brown. The officers' reluctance to agree to any such enterprise might have been prompted because of the absence of a part of the fleet which was dispatched towards Jaigad on the 7th of the month. Brown, therefore, was obliged to raise the siege of Gheria and move to Jaigad. But the case at Jaigad was also far from being conducive and the entire expedition had to be terminated on the 21st of October.

Once again, there was enough reason for Kanhoji to stand tall. Unlike the previous time, the Marathas were anticipating a British action because of the recent preparations at Bombay. Kanhoji's loyal officer Rudraji Anant, who was also the governor of the Vijaydurg fort, had managed the war quite well. The important lesson which emerges out of this entire episode is that more than anything else, it was the faulty machines of the English, the insubordination of the officials and soldiers alike and a poor guidance to the expedition that caused the British the embarrassment. As such, there was only one occasion when the English soldiers came into direct contact with the Maratha soldiers after landing, otherwise there was no man to man confrontation or even naval skirmish during the events stretched out to nearly two months. There was a need for the English to indulge in some kind of serious introspection as to what ailed their spirited preparations and why they failed to transform them into glittering success. Boone, fortunately, found an immediate excuse for the entire debacle as he forwarded his report of the events by pointing out that 'Angre's ships were faster and more maneuverable'. Boone had also placed orders for the construction of three fast, light ships, each of about 160 tons, for service under the Bombay council.[244] Happily for Boone, the Company administrators (at London) appeared to be convinced with the logic and had assured that a squadron of the British Navy would be sent out to assist the East India Company at Bombay. Boone, thus, got a new lease of life and was encouraged to prepare another plan to bring down the authority of Kanhoji Angre in the Konkan waters.

(F) THE BATTLE FOR KULABA (DECEMBER 1721) - This battle was thrust upon Kanhoji Angre by a military and naval alliance of British and Portuguese establishments in India. This battle is interesting on many counts, some of which may be enumerated as follows. In the first instance, the British and Portuguese committed both their naval squadrons as well as their armies on land to achieve the objective (capture of the naval fort/base of Kulaba). In terms of sheer tactics, the combined European onslaught tried to achieve numerical superiority, so as to get an edge over their opponent. Thirdly, Kanhoji, who was besieged at his fort Kulaba, could not put into use his naval vessels against the enemies who had, as a pre-requisite, enforced a naval blockade of the

Kulaba fort. Despite all these limitations, the result of this battle went against the enemies of Kanhoji Angre.

Kanhoji had re-strengthened Kulaba as his naval headquarters early in the 18th century. In addition to the presence of a squadron of his naval fleet, the long-range guns and canons placed at the bastions of the fort of Kulaba added to its defenses. The adjacent fort of Hirakot was also equipped and its defenses were also strengthened recently as Kanhoji anticipated an attack on Kulaba – his naval headquarters. As per strategic considerations, the location of Kulaba was bothersome to the Portuguese and the British alike. As it was lying 'too close' to the British Company's headquarters at Bombay, the threats emanating from Kulaba in combination with that of the island fortress of Khanderi, were terrifying for Bombay. On the other hand, the Portuguese establishment at Chaul was virtually sandwiched between the strongholds of Kanhoji Angre on the Konkan Coast. In addition, Kulaba stood somewhat equidistant from the British Bombay and the Portuguese Chaul. Hence, the very purpose of the alliance between the Portuguese and the English made sense if it was to exert military pressure on Kulaba from both the sides simultaneously - through a joint action.

The Europeans, in broader sense, wanted to divert the attention of Kanhoji Angre on two fronts, viz. land and water. Their battle-plan, in the first place, was to strangulate the supply and any possible help to Kulaba through a naval blockade of the fort of Kulaba; and on the land, the plan was simply to ensure that no supply or enforcement reached Kanhoji Angre at Kulaba from the Maratha King. The timing of the assault (full credit must be given to the Europeans) could not have been much better as the troops of the Maratha King, led by the Peshwa, were busy fighting the Nizam of Hyderabad.[245] The Europeans, therefore, were confident that their most avowed enemy on the Konkan coast was not in a position to get any supply or reinforcement from his Maratha Sovereign. Hence, they anticipated a 'cornered' Kanhoji Angre, to surrender and come to terms with them.

Boone had been skillful in proposing the plan of action to the Portuguese Viceroy. The Viceroy, in turn, was not only convinced of the outcome but also seemed quite enthusiastic about it. He assured that, in addition to a contingent of Portuguese fleet, approximately 3000 his troops would take part in this action. A similar number was committed by the English and it was decided that the two forces would assemble at (Portuguese) Chaul, form where they would march together for Kulaba. Before the commencement of this expedition, the British (naval) strength was further augmented by the arrival of a squadron of British navy (sent by the Company's Directors at London) under the command of Matthews. Boone was now confident, more than ever, regarding the outcome of the action.

The expedition took off on a positive note. The combined European forces soon surrounded the Kulaba fort from the land side. Displaying superiority of tactics, the Europeans divided their forces in such a manner that the English contingent grouped right in front of the fort and the Portuguese contingent, a little distance away. From their disposition, it was evident that the English would take the lead in the offensive against the fort and the Portuguese were to ensure that not only was the English action facilitated by their presence but was also subsequently followed by them. On the other hand, the naval squadrons of both the nationalities had secured the adjoining waters of the Kulaba fort in such a way that the small contingent of the Maratha fleet stationed at Kulaba had absolutely no chance of coming out and take field. However, it is surprising to note that incessant and intensified bombing of the fort was not carried out by the European fleet. The plausible explanations could be: (a) that the range of guns of the Kulaba fort were long enough to keep the enemy ships at bay, and prevent them to carry out such a kind of bombardment that could have damaged the fort walls; (b) that it was not deemed necessary by the Europeans to do so because of their confidence on the land-force which was to do the main job (of storming the fort). If option (b) of the above was the consideration, it could well be taken as a serious tactical error on the part of the Europeans because that would have, at least, diverted the attention of the comparatively insufficient garrison strength of the fort.[246] Anyway, the presence of the European fleet in the vicinity also ensured that any naval assistance to the Kulaba fort was virtually ruled out till the time the land forces accomplished their mission. At the same time, there was nothing left for Kanhoji to guess regarding the next step of the European action.

The European action started on the 24th of December with the English party, approximately a thousand of them, taking the lead by way of a direct assault on the fort gate. The time of the assault has been recorded as 4 p.m. which suggests that the tidal factor was also taken into consideration so that the plan succeeded. Colonel Braithwaite led the assaulting party to the main gate of the fort where they braved the heavy firing from the defenders of the fort. Simultaneously, attempts were made to scale the walls of the fort with the help of scaling ladders etc. However, all the attempts of the English were frustrated by the defenders, and after an hour's determined efforts, the assault party lost courage and retreated in haste with a heavy casualty. In the process of retreat, they left behind their field guns, ammunition and equipments. Kanhoji exhibited brilliant tactical insight at that juncture and immediately asked Pilaji Jadhav to charge on the Portuguese detachment which had been a curious onlooker of the British action. The Cavalry charge of Pilaji Jadhav was so sudden and furious that the Portuguese contingent did not even get the time to react, and they fled from the field instead of giving a fight. The Maratha cavalry chased them and got as many of them as possible, under the blades of their swords. Elated by the proceedings, Kanhoji took another bold decision at that point of time. He sent a detachment from the fort's garrison to deliver another blow, this time on the English contingent which was in the process of regrouping as they had made a retreat from the advanced position. Without much difficulty, the Maratha party was able to convert its assigned task into brilliant tactical success. The English troops were mercilessly harassed and chased away in the darkness of the night. By the next morning, quite unexpectedly, the environs of Kulaba, with the exception of the waters surrounding it, were free from the enemy presence.

The English blamed the Portuguese for the failure of the expedition. Kanhoji Angre, who was very much present at Kulaba to launch counter-offensive, also understood the implications of a combined attack. He took advantage of the so called differences between the English and the Portuguese, and immediately approached the latter with generous terms of peace. The Portuguese Viceroy, in turn, responded positively to the Maratha overtures, and had apparently asked the British too to come to terms with Kanhoji Angre. It has been argued that the Viceroy's considerations for the 'prospects of peace and amity with the Marathas' were more a result of news of the arrival of a strong Maratha force under the command of the Peshwa[247] for the rescue rather than sheer generosity or for the sake of the 'treaties of the past'. Whatever the considerations be, the end result was a Portuguese-Maratha treaty signed between the

Viceroy and the Maratha Peshwa. The terms of this treaty were ratified by both the parties on the 22nd of January, 1722. The very nature of this treaty was 'offensive-defensive' as both of them agreed to help one another against enemies who were not at peace with themselves. Moreover, the Portuguese also agreed to supply and sell ammunition and artillery to the Peshwa at fair price. It could be noted that both Kanhoji Angre as well as the Peshwa benefited from this treaty in their own way. On the other hand, for the English and more specifically for the governor Charles Boone, the failure of the Kulaba expedition left him with no excuse. He had repeatedly failed against Kanhoji Angre and it was going to be difficult for him to justify his actions as the Governor of Bombay to the Directors of the Company at London. His term as the governor also came to an end and he sailed back for home as a dejected man. [248]

The Maratha accord with the Portuguese, and the departure of Governor Boone from Bombay, necessarily slowed down the spate of European hostilities on Angre, but such a situation did not last long. The new governor of Bombay William Phipps, found a new ally in the French Company. The two companies quickly resolved their mutual differences and not only agreed to honour the passes issued by each other to the vessels plying on the Malabar coast, but also promised 'not to assist the enemies of each other with ammunitions, guns or provisions directly or indirectly'...[249]

On the other hand, the Dutch, duly prompted by the Sawant of Wadi, made an attempt on Vijaydurg in 1724. It is said that a fight had broken out between the troops of Angre and the Sawant near the latter's territory. As the Dutch factory of Vengurla, which was nearby to the Sawant's territory, was also affected and threatened with an attack, the Dutch decided to attack Angre's stronghold Vijaydurg instead. The Dutch surrounded the fort of Vijaydurg with seven ships carrying 30-50 guns each and two bomb-vessels. It is also said that the Dutch attempted a landing too to storm the fort but they were beaten back by the garrison of the fort. The Dutch retreated after some time and no more action was witnessed by the two sides. Kanhoji Angre, in the meanwhile, tried to improve the relations with the new governor of Bombay, William Phipps. He sent a letter to Bombay offering peace and it was well reciprocated by the Bombay authorities.[250]

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[1] For a list of the naval commanders during Sambhaji's time, see also Gokhale Kamal, *Sambhaji*, p. 320; Bendre V.S., *Chhatrapati Sambhaji*, pp. 288-89.

[2] ERS-II, no. 521, p. 318.

[3] Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p. 79; see also, Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

[4] Hatalkar V. G., *op. cit.*, pp. 27-32 (Chapter IV).

[5] ERS - II, no. 469, pp. 277-78; no. 471, pp. 279-81; no. 481, pp. 293-94, etc.; SPS, no. 2213..

[6] ERS, Vol. II, no., 516, p. 316; 517, p. 316; 519, pp. 317-18, 520, p. 318.

[7] ERS, Vol. II, no. 513, p. 315.

[8] ERS, Vol. II, no. 521, p. 318.

[9] Kulkarni G. T., *The Mughal-Maratha Relations*, p. 20; See also Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p.190.

[10] Bombay's letter to Surat dated, 19th of Jan, 1682, quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[11] Ibid., p. 84.

[12] ERS, Vol.II, no. 513, p. 315. See also Banaji D. R., *Bombay and the Siddis*, p. 32.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 84. Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 231.

[15] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[16] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[17] Orme, *op. cit.*, p.107; cf. Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 79 (fn. 26).

[18] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 79 (vide fn. 27).

[19] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

[20] Ibid., p. 109.

[21] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 79 (fn. 31).

[22] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

[23] ERS, Vol. II, no. 519, p. 317; SPS, 2287, 2292.

[24] ERS, Vol. II, no., 521, p. 316; SPS, 2292 and 2293.

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[25] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 77 (fn.20).

[26] Orme, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

[27] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 79 (fn. 29).

[28] Sane, K. N., (ed.) *Kavyetihas Samgraha*, p. 13. Cf. Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, p. 89 (fn.39).

[29] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 117-118.

[30] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81 (fn. 34).

[31] *Akhbarat*, quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 81 (fn.35).

[32] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 118. Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 226.

[33] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 81 (fn. 41).

[34] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 118; See also Sarkar J., *Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 312.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Sarkar J., *House of Shivaji*, p. 223.

[37] Modak, J. B., *Marathi Samrajyachi Chhoti Bakhar*, in *Kavyetihas Samgraha, op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

[38] Fawcett, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 109.

[39] Ibid., p. 110. Bombay reported damages worth Rs. 4500/-, between Nov. 1681 to July 1682 caused by the Maratha fleet operating from Khanderi. Incidentally there is no corresponding action originating from the Siddi base of Underi. See also, Sarkar J., *Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 311.

[40] The Portuguese were apparently uncomfortable with the Arab fleet. The contemporary Portuguese sources occasionally refer to this 'unholy alliance' between the two which was fearsome with respect to the Portuguese interests. See, Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 228-29.

[41] *Kavyetihas Samgraha*, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15. Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 289.

[42] Sarkar J., History of Aurangzeb, Vol. IV, p. 311.

[43] Fawcett, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 112. The same information is also supported by the Persian source *Akhbarat* dated 4-11-1682, quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

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[44] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 95; See also, Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, p. 91. Incidentally, it is believed that Kanhoji Angre, who later on became the most famous Maratha Admiral, had joined the naval services under Sambhaji in the year 1685. Ketkar D. R., *Sarkhel Kanhoji Angre*, p. 24.

[45] Secret Outward Letter-book 4, p. 137 of 27 Feb, 1686, quoted by Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

[46] Forrest G. W., *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 147.

[47] *Shivacharitra Sahitya,* Vol. IX, p. 79.

[48] Khobrekar, V. G., *op. cit.*, P. 91.

[49] This information is based on some unpublished British correspondences quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

[50] The practice of giving employment to such deserters was followed even during the time of Shivaji. *Siddi* Misri was one such prominent deserter who participated in many naval expeditions from the Maratha side. See Malgaonkar M, *Kanhoji Angre*, p. 64.

[51] ERS, Vol. II, no. 510.

[52] ERS, Vol. II, no. 519. See also, SPS, nos. 2287, 2292.

[53] Ibid. In this letter, the fear is expressed that 'if the *Siddi* still continues in that port (Bombay), he (Sambhaji) will be very severe'.

[54] ERS, Vol. II, no. 521. Bombay writes to Surat that 'the Raja's Armado, consisting of 50 sails of ghurabs and galvats, all fitted at Rajapur and having on board between four to five thousand men...very suddenly will be coming northward...for the raja is very much enraged that we should harbour *Siddi*...'

[55] Sambhaji had deputed his most able and shrewd diplomat Awaji Pandit to Bombay on 20th Nov, 1680, with a letter for necessary discussions with the English. See, Orme, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

[56] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 77 (fn. 18). Cf. ERS, Vol. II, no. 519.

[57] Ibid., p. 79.

[58] ERS, Vol. II, no. 530.

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[59] Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p.84.

[60] Quoted by. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 339. See also Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[61] Fawcett, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 110.

[62] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 112; cf. Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[63] On 20th Jan, 1683, Sheikh Mohammed, Aurangzeb's envoy, came to Goa with a letter of Aurangzeb. The Viceroy, though agreed to allow the Mughals to pass through the Portuguese territory and sell them food-grain; he refused to declare war on the Marathas because of the existing terms of friendship between them. See, Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

[64] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

[65] Sambhaji had demanded some large and small pistols, dogs, small birding pieces, large mirrors and some rarities. Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 86 (fn. 60). Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 340-41.

[66] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 115. See, also Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

[67] Ibid., p. 126; The English records mention that Sambhaji had captured, in particular, Mahim, Kolva, Dantorah, Sargaon, Supara, Karanja and Elephanta from the Portuguese. See, Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 89; and. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 235.

[68] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 126. Orme mentions that Sambhaji's troops landed (by galvats) and captured Karanja on 24th Dec, 1683.

[69] Ibid., pp. 96-97; See also, Desai W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[70] Orme writes that Sambhaji immediately made peace with the British when he came to know about the intension of Aurangzeb to take Bombay as well as Bassein, Daman etc. In addition Sambhaji also requested Bombay not to allow the Mughal fleet to land at Bombay. Orme, *op.cit.*, p. 115 and 120.

[71] Ibid., p. 112. It is believed that the Portuguese exploited the situation of crisis created by Sambhaji who, after the failure of his Janjira campaign, prohibited the supply of provisions to the

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island of Bombay. The Portuguese, too, stopped the export of provision from their ports to Bombay. As a result, the prices of the necessities in Bombay rose to almost 300%.

[72] Quoted by Desai W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[73] Quoted by Sarkar J., *Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, pp. 30-31, 36; Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 306-07.

[74] *Bharatiya Itihas Samshodhak Mandal - Quarterly,* Vol. II, pp. 27-37; also quoted by Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 348-51. See also Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92.

[75] Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 33.

[76] Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 93 (vide fn. 83).

[77] Anderson, Philip, *The English in Western India*, (Chap VI), p. 184.

[78] Desai W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 36.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ovington, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

[81] See, for example, EF (1665-67), p. 51, 293 etc.

[82] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[83] Ibid. The representatives to Raigad were asked to convey that the rifles and pistols required by Sambhaji were out of stock.

[84] Quoted by Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 308, 362-63.

[85] Anderson J., *The English in Western India*, p. 242.

[86] A Portuguese letter dated 29 April 1682 reads, "An interpreter has just informed me that Sambhaji has sent stones and lime to Anjadiv and has ordered that no money should be spared to erect a fort..." quoted by Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 77. Interestingly, the English factors at Karwar also report that Sambhaji had already 'started collecting necessary materials with the intent of fortifying the island'. Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p.106; See also Sarkar J., *Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 315.

[87] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 78; See also, Danvers, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 366.

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[88] Ibid. See also Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 228-29.

[89] See, Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 228.

[90] Kakodkar, P. R., *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

[91] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Kincaid and Parasnis, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[94] Sarkar J., *Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, p. 226. See also, Danvers, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 370.

[95] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 112. Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 232-33.

[96] Because of the proven connivance of the Portuguese with the Mughals when the latter initiated their military offensive against the Marathas; particularly the capture of Parsik from the Marathas and the permission to allow the Mughal fleet with provisions through Thane and other parts of the Portuguese territory.

[97] *Jedhe Shakawali-Karina*, *op. cit.*, p. 315. The *Shakawali* records that it was captured in the month of *Margashirsha* (i.e., Nov-Dec), 1683.

[98] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.

[99] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 110

[100] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81. Cf. Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 232, 235.

[101] Bendre identifies this fort as 'Morro Fort' probably because the Portuguese used to call it *Morro Cheul*. Bendre V. S., *op. cit.*, p. 233.

[102] Ibid., p. 234. For a detailed description of the siege of Chaul, see also, Sarkar J., *Aurangzeb*, Vol. IV, pp. 317-35.

[103] Kakodkar P. R., *op. cit.*, p. 92; see also Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

[104] Ibid., pp. 93-95.

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[105] See, Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 82 (fn. 220); Yakut was the same person who had transported provisions for the Mughal troops in the Deccan when they were sent against Sambhaji. The Portuguese record also alleges that the *Siddi* 'lent' 400 men for the same purpose.

[106] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 82 (fn. 22).

[107] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 87 (fn. 56); See also, Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 114 (fn. 50).

[108] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[109] Quoted by Gokhale Kamal, *op. cit.*, p. 114 (fn. 50).

[110] See, Kulkarni, A. R., 'Portuguese in the Deccan Politics: A Study of New Marathi Documents from Lisbon' in T. R. D' Souza (ed.) *Indo Portuguese: Old Issues, New Questions.*

[111] ERS, Vol. II, p. 340.

[112] Manucci N., *Storia da Mogor*, Vol. II, p. 262. See also Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[113] *Shiva Charitra Pradeep*, p. 32; See also, Orme, *op. cit.*, p.123.

[114] Bendre V.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 237-39.

[115] Ibid., p. 244; See also Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[116] Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[117] Manucci also provides us with valuable details of the Goa campaign. See, Manucci N., *op. cit.*, pp. 272-75.

[118] *Sanads and Letters* (ed.) Parasnis & Mavajee, no. 61. pp. 218-19.

[119] Pissurlencar, P. *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110.

[120] The Viceroy might have realized that for the successful implementation of the Mughal campaign (against the Marathas) in the Deccan, it was necessary (for the Mughals) to maintain their supply through the sea in a convenient manner. However, had the Mughals been allowed to use Goa as a naval base, Aurangzeb might have liked to keep it for himself - thereby seriously undermining the safety of the Portuguese headquarters of the *Estado*.

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[121] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 88. Pissurlencar quotes a contemporary document to explain the sudden retreat of the Marathas. He says that the Marathas feared that they would meet the same fate as that of the Bijapuri forces which had captured the 'island of the dead' in 1570 but were totally destroyed by the firing from the Portuguese fleet which had surrounded the island, thereby making any escape impossible.

[122] *Jedhe Shakawali-Karina-Karina*, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

[123] Manucci N., *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 263-66.

[124] *Kaifiyat, Yadi* etc. p. 3; see also, Duff Grant, *op. cit.*, p. 231, Nairne, A. K., *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[125] On the east coast, the English Company had entered into a severe conflict with the Mughals apparently because of illegal exactions (from the Company establishments) by the Mughal officials. The English, in retaliation, had sacked Hugli in 1686, fought at Hijli and committed atrocities at Balasore in 1688, before finally making peace with the Mughals. Probably, as a means of revenge, Aurangzeb ordered the Siddi to attack the British establishment at Bombay. See, Sarkar, J., *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. V, pp. 246-255.

[126] Wright Arnold, *Annesley of Surat and His Times*, p. 128.

[127] Ovington, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[128] Bruce, J., *Annals of the Hon. East India Company*, Vol. III, p. 124.

[129] Paranjpe Y. S., 'Military traditions of Maharastra', pp. 412-13, in Bhagwat A. K., *Maharastra, A Profile.*

[130] Pissurlencar P., 'Rajaram and the Portuguese', IHRC, Vol. XVII (1940), p. 223.

[131] Kakodkar P. R., *op. cit.*, pp. 272-75.

[132] *Marathi Daftar*, p. 109.

[133] Sen, S. N., 'Half a Century of Maratha Navy', JIH, Vol. XI (Part I-III). p. 256. It has been suggested by Sen that shortly after the flight of Rajaram to Jinji, a Maratha vessel

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circumnavigated Cape-Comorin and safely conveyed ladies of the royal family to their new abode.

[134] Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

[135] Pissurlencar P., 'Rajaram…' *op. cit.*, p. 224.

[136] See, Kakodkar, *op. cit.*, p. 159. This was used as one of the pretexts for the Mughal action on the Portuguese possessions in the north by Aurangzeb.

[137] Sen S. N., 'Half a Century…' *op. cit.*, p. 256.

[138] Apte, B. K., *op. cit.*, p. 201-03. Apte gives details about two types of passes – *Dastak* and *Kaul*. While a *Dastak* was a pass permitting the ship (possessing it) to sail within the jurisdiction of the issuing power, a *Kaul*, on the other hand, allowed the holder to move on all the seas, on the authority of the issuing government. The *Kaul* enabled to identify the nationality of the ship. It seems that a ship possessing a *Kaul* was not necessarily exempt from purchasing a *Dastak* of a foreign government.

[139] *Kaifiyat, Yadi* etc., p. 2; the surname Angre is derived from the name of the family's hereditary village Angarwadi near Pune.

[140] *Ibid*, Tukoji was subsequently elevated and made a commander of 200.

[141] Malgaonkar M, *op. cit.*, p. 12; Malgaonkar has written a brilliant account of the life and achievement of Kanhoji Angre.

[142] *Ibid*, pp. 44-45.

[143] This description is largely drawn on the basis of *Kaifiyat, Yadi* etc., pp. 2- 3.

[144] *Ibid*, p. 3.

[145] Malgaonkar M., *Ibid*, p. 60; See also Dhabu, *Kulabkar Angre*, Chap. 2, p. 11.

[146] *Kaifiyat, Yadi, op. cit.*, p. 3; He not only strengthened their defenses but also assimilated a sizeable number of vessels as a part of his navy and began to exercise his authority over the

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waters of Konkan; Dhabu, D. G., *op. cit.*, has listed as many as 51 different types of boats/vessels being used during the Angre period.

[147] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[148] *Kaifiyat, Yadi, op. cit.*, p. 4.

[149] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 61, 65.

[150] Ibid., p. 65.

[151] Sen, S. N., 'Half a Century…,' *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[152] See, Ovington, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-243.

[153] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[154] Ibid., p. 79, 83.

[155] Sen, S. N., 'Half a Century…,' *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[156] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 81; though Mohite was not accorded any such title.

[157] See, Dhabu, *op. cit.*, Chap. 2, pp. 11-12.

[158] It seems probable that the *Siddi* fleet must have charged from Mazagaon where it wintered during the monsoon. See, Banaji D. R., *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

[159] Quoted by Khobrekar V. G., *op. cit.*, p. 127; See also Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

[160] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 119.

[161] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 134.

[162] *Ibid.*

[163] Sen, S. N., 'Half a Century…,' *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[164] The relationship between the British and the Dutch governments were friendly at that point of time in Europe. Hence, it was expected that the respective trading companies would also follow a cordial relation between them overseas.

[165] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 105.

[166] Sen, S. N., 'Half a Century…,' *op. cit.*, p. 259.

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[167] Ibid.

[168] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 84.

[169] Ibid., p. 107; see also Desai, W.S., *op. cit.*,

[170] Hatalkar V. G., *Relations Between the French and the Marathas* (1668-1815), p. 59. Rajaram, however, sold Pondicherry to the Dutch even though the French were ready to pay as high a price as 25,000 pagodas for it.

[171] Mainly on account of the possession of the island fortress of Janjira as well as the hospitality extended by the English - who never allowed the enemies of *Siddi* to chase him down to Mazagaon where the *Siddi* usually wintered his fleet every year.

[172] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 130.

[173] Ibid., pp. 191-92. Reportedly, Kanhoji had also removed guns from the captured ships (so that they could be used for his armada), P. 185.

[174] Ibid, p. 105.

[175] Shipping and ship-building industry flourished in India in the 16-17th century. Many large and sea-worthy ships owned by big merchants or the royal families made rounds to the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea region. For more information on ship-building activities in India, see, Qaisar, A. J., 'Shipbuilding in the Mughal Empire during the 17th Century Shipbuilding...' IESHR, Vol.2, June 1968, pp. (149-170).

[176] The proximity of the site from Bombay, the mainstay of the British enterprise in India, added to the strategic value of this fort. It was built quite strong with massive ramparts including seventeen bastions, where heavy guns were deployed to ward off the enemy. One of the gates opened towards the coast side which was well out of reach during high tides. The other gate (towards south) opened in the sea and had a fixed landing stage.

[177] For example the people belonging to the Koli, Bhandari and other seafaring castes could be well utilized dor naval services. See, *The Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island*, Vol. I, (Chap IV).

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[178] See, Dhabu, D.G., *Kulabkar Angre*, p. 10 (*Samalochana*).

[179] Ketkar D. R., *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[180] Sardesai G. S., *Marathai Riyasat*, Vol. V. p. 105.

[181] Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

[182] Desai W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[183] Ibid., p. 56.

[184] Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

[185] The *Siddi* had no options but to come to terms with the Marathas/Kanhoji Angre in view of the peace which was signed between Kanhoji Angre and the English at Bombay in the year 1713. Kanhoji, as a result, was free to direct his energy toward the reduction of *Siddi*.

[186] Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

[187] Though the Portuguese were apparently not pleased with this treaty and had offered their help to the Mughals against Kanhoji Angre; See Khobrekar, *op. cit.*, vide fn. 83, p. 129.

[188] It should be remembered that *Siddi* was the vassal of the Mughal emperor and he still retained the prestigious Maratha fort of Raigad ever since he captured it from the Marathas after the death of Sambhaji.

[189] Desai, *op. cit.*, vide footnote no. 3 & 4, p. 77.

[190] Edward, S. M., *Rise of Bombay*, pp. 141-42.

[191] The Bombay letter mentions that the *Siddi*, for his kind treatment to the Bombay vessels and to maintain friendship with him, 'may be given a present of three yards of scarlet cloth, a pair of pistols and gilt sword.'

[192] SSRPD, Vol. I, letter nos. 17 & 18.

[193] Pissurlencar P, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

[194] *Ibid.*

[195] Quoted by Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p, 56.

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[196] John, Biddulph, *The Pirates Of Malabar*, p. 77; cf. Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.

[197] Pissurlencar, P., *op. cit.*, p.143.

[198] Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, vide footnote no. 2, p. 56; It is because of such actions that Kanhoji had been referred to as rebel, 'independent of the Maratha Raja' by the British.

[199] Ibid.

[200] So important was this fort to Kanhoji's scheme of things that when an agreement was arrived at with the Peshwa, Khanderi was also included in the list of the 26 forts and other fortified places transferred to him by the Chhatrapati Shahu, whom he had transferred his allegiance to. For the list of the forts transferred to Kanhoji Angre, see. Dhabu, *op. cit.*, chap. 2, p.16.

[201] John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[202] Ibid, p. 82.

[203] See, Dhabu, *op. cit.*, chap. 2, p. 16.

[204] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 143.

[205] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p.199.

[206] See, John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

[207] Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 65; See also, John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

[208] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p.191

[209] The English Company had just concluded a futile war at Vengurla and with the Karwar Raja; See John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-98; See also Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, Chapter 33.

[210] Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 66.

[211] John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

[212] Ibid.

[213] On 7th of May, it was decided that an expedition against Vijaydurg would comprise of 20 galivats, manned with sepoys, to retake, if possible, the captured vessels, "if they were attacked,

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to repel force by force, and if possible plunder his country." Refer, John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

[214] As per traditions followed in Maharastra, when the sea became quite rough at the onset of the monsoon, the sea going vessels were pulled ashore for repairs etc. Moreover, because of the heavy and incessant rains, it was not possible to undertake any sea voyage/operation of fruitful nature. Once the rains subsided (by the month of September-October), the Marathas would venture again into the sea preferably on the auspicious day of *Narli Purnima.* Even Ovington, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82, takes not of this festival. 123.The *Narli Purnima* is still celebrated in the coastal Maharastra.

[215] Malgaonkar, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

[216] While Malgaonkar mentions that there were 2500 men, Desai, [*op. cit.*, p. 66] quotes 4000 men, who made great effort to reduce Gheria.

[217] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p.199.

[218] The ships hauled ashore or even those standing in the harbour were usually covered with dry palm-leaf matting to save them from being drenched in the monsoon shower. Such thatches were naturally inflammable.

[219] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 141.

[220] Malgaonkar, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

[221] Malgaonkar, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

[222] It should be remembered that the harbour of the fort lay in the concave looking structure which was towards the eastern side of the fort.

[223] The first being the reduction of the fort through continuous cannonading, and the second being a direct naval engagement.

[224] It was the eastern side where the harbour was located and also the side which led to the main gate of the fort; Malgaonkar [*op. cit.*, p. 209] writes that over 300 men were to be landed there.

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[225] With the strength of a battalion, numbering 558, commanded by Capt John mills; quoted by Malgaonkar, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

[226] John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124.

[227] This decision was based on the assumption that the garrison faced a 'critical shortage' of ammunition.

[228] Boone is reported to have asked his sailors to 'volunteer' for landing. Rich rewards viz. 40 rupees in cash [nearly equal to 5 pounds at that time] compensation for the loss of a leg or arm @ 30 pounds; employment for life under the company; the married men were promised, if killed, that their widows should receive 30 pounds, 10 pounds extra for each child. For a detailed discussion, see, John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, pp.124-125.

[229] Ibid., p. 125. Some fifty ore sixty men were killed or wounded before the landing was effected.

[230] Some boats also capsized throwing the landing party into water.

[231] John, Biddulph, *Ibid*, p. 127. Though, Kanhoji's proposal for peace sent on the 11th November was immediately rejected by Boone.

[232] Forrest G. W., *Maratha Series*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II., p. 12, 15, See also Orme, *op. cit.*, p. 123. For a discussion on the Rama Kamathi episode, refer, Ravindranath Vaman Ramdas, 'Rama-Kamati: the Man and His Achievements', in Bendre V. S. (ed.) *Nibandha Samgraha* (Proceedings of the 4th Session organized by the Maharastra History Council), pp. 249-55.

[233] John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

[234] In fact, they blame the de Castro let the Maratha boats with necessary provisions to reach Khanderi.

[235] Forrest, *Maratha Series*, Vol. II, pp. 17-18.

[236] It is interesting to note that the *Phram* was not ready when the expedition sailed for its destination. This implies that the expedition was taken at hand without proper preparations – an

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example of the overconfidence of the British, and at the same time, gross miscalculation of the strength of Kanhoji Angre.

[237] Magaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p. 232.

[238] Hirakot was a coastal fortress, which was adjacent to the fort of Kulaba. Possession and proper fortification of this 'twin fortress to Kulaba' would have surely deterred the enemy from making any daring attack on Kulaba. See, Ketkar D. R., *op. cit.*, p. 27. Ketkar believes that the fort of Sarjekot was constructed in 1699, whereas Hirakot was fortified in 1700 A.D. by Kanhoji Angre after a naval war with the Siddi of Janjira.

[239] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[240] It should be noted that Boone had ordered for the construction of the *Phram* especially for this expedition. However, it was not ready at the time of the commencement of the expedition and the fleet sailed without the *Phram.* In addition to this, Boone had another naval vessel with specialized function which he proudly referred to as 'Captain Johnson's Machine'. Interestingly enough, this vessel only finds mention in Boone's plan; it was conspicuously absent in the entire expedition. Boone had to announce that this vessel was not ready for the task. On the other the *Phram* along with *Chandos* and *Pelham,* could join the fleet at Vijaydurg on the 27th of September.

[241] One of 500 tons, one of two hundred tons, and ten smaller tons were set on fire and burnt. However, it is believed that this fire was caused as a consequence of an explosion on one of the English vessels which was triggered by a chance shot from the *Phram* that landed on it. For more information, see, John, Biddulph, *op. cit.*, p.147.

[242] Malgaonkar M., *op. cit.*, p.239.

[243] For more information on Brown's attempt on Jaigad, refer, Bidulph John, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-50.

[244] Wadia, R. A., *The Bombay Dockyard and the Wadia Master Builders Wadia.* See the chapters 'Shipbuilding at Bombay' (pp. 102-121) and 'The First master builders' (pp. 122-131). As early

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as 1673, two new vessels built at Bombay were taken by governor Aungier to boost the strength of the 'Bombay Marine. References of repair works being carried out at Bombay are also aplenty in the English records.

[245] That fight was over the interpretation of the Mughal *firman* to the Maratha Monarch which virtually made the latter the *de-facto* sovereign of the area earlier held by Shivaji. It also gave the right to collect *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* of the Deccan Subah.

[246] It is estimated that the garrison strength of the fort must have been about 1,000 infantry and 700 cavalry. In addition a detachment comprising of 1,500 cavalry and 1,000 infantry, sent by the King Shahu had already arrived. This contingent, led by Pilaji Jadhav, was deployed outside, near the northern side of the fort.

[247] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[248] Incidentally, Boone's ship started on its voyage to England on the same day when the treaty between the Peshwa and the Portuguese was finalized i.e. 9th January, 1722.

[249] Foster, *Maratha Series*, Vol. II, p. 36.

[250] Ibid., pp. 37-39 and 40-41.

5. END OF AN ERA

The death of Kanhoji Angre in 1729 disrupted the phenomenon of Maratha Naval ascendancy. The command of the Maratha navy passed on to his son and successor Shekhoji Angre,[1] who proved to be as enthusiastic and capable as his father. But the period of continuity soon came to an end because of untimely death of Shekhoji. After that, the history of the Angre family and that of the Maratha navy is that of internal feud and subsequent decline. A significant cause responsible for both the above-mentioned events was the complete dominance of the Peshwas in the Maratha politics. The Peshwas had taken the Martha power to such a commanding height that it was virtually impossible to resist the Maratha power in any form. The *Siddi* was cornered, the British were brought at par, and the Portuguese were swept away from the vicinity of the Maratha possessions at Bassein. The expansion of the Maratha power in the Indian heartland made them complacent as regards the naval priorities of the *Swarajya*. As a result, not only was the naval establishment ignored but weakened too because of the active participation of the Peshwas in the internal affairs of the Angre house. Finally, the Peshwa, in alliance with the British, sounded the death-knell for the Maratha Navy in 1755. The Maratha navy could never recover from the shock of the debacles at Suvarnadurg and Vijaydurg. In this way, a glorious chapter of a century-long naval pre-eminence of the Marathas in the Konkan waters ended in 1756.

During the period following the death of Kanhoji Angre till the final defeat of the Angre-navy in 1756, the Maratha naval action (largely undertaken by the Angre clan, at times in conformity of the 'grand plan' of the Maratha *Swarajya*) could be studied under the following headings:

(1) Participation in the campaign against the *Siddi* of Janjira (1733-35)
(2) Action against the Portuguese (the Bassein campaign, 1739)
(3) Contest with the British Navy, viz., the Battle of Suvarnadurg (1755), and the Battle of Vijaydurg (1756).

The study of these naval battles provides us with the opportunity to analyze the strategy and tactics put into use by the Marathas in their naval conflicts so as to maintain their sway over the Konkan waters. At the same time, the eventual downfall of the Angre's navy also gives us an insight into the limitations faced by them.

I

THE SUCCESSORS OF KANHOJI ANGRE AND PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SIDDHI OF JANJIRA: As noted earlier, the *Siddi* had always been a pain in the neck for the Marathas. The presence of the *Siddi* on the western coast prevented the Marathas to exercise their complete authority on the Konkan coast and its surrounding waters. The *Siddi* alliance with the Mughals was the most crucial factor in restraining the Marathas from an undivided attention towards the reduction of the *Siddi* power on land. On the other hand, the physical and logistical support of the British fleet also enabled the *Siddi* to defy the Maratha writ on the Konkan waters. The failure of Shivaji, and later on, his son and successor – Sambhaji, to compel the *Siddi* to come to terms has been noted in the preceding pages. After the death of Sambhaji, the *Siddi* had gained in power and stature. His enlarged territorial possessions included the prestigious Maratha fort of Raigad too. The *Siddi* not only wrested from the Marathas all the territory he had once possessed on the coast (which he had subsequently lost during his struggle with Shivaji), but also added to his possession the forts of Anjanwel, Mandangad, Rewas and Thal etc. on the coast. His renewed strength was creating hindrances to the Maratha shipping in and around Kulaba as well as Chaul and further south. During the period of Kanhoji Angre, no serious Maratha-*Siddi* conflict, either on land or on water, has been recorded. Kanhoji Angre was rather too preoccupied with the English throughout his life. Since Kanhoji Angre had taken the Maratha navy to a new height, it was expected that his successors would be contesting with the *Siddi* or any other power challenging their authority over the Konkan waters.

On the other hand, the Maratha army had also come of age. Under the able guidance of the first two Peshwas, the power and influence of the Maratha rule, for the first time, could be experienced deep in the heart of the country. Gujarat, Malwa, Bundelkhand etc. were subdued, and Delhi now seemed to be on their target. However, the stretch of the Konkan coast, along with its adjoining territories including some crucial coastal fortresses, was still under the *Siddi* control. Hence, in a situation where the Maratha power was being exercised well beyond the Maratha land, the urge to recover the '*Swarajya*' territory (from the most hated enemy – the *Siddi*) also acted as a catalyst for the Maratha action against the *Siddi*. In the name of the Maratha Pride, therefore, the Peshwa had sought to completely destroy the *Siddi* power, for which he elicited the collaboration of the navy of the Angres' too. The Maratha aspiration of re-establishing their control over the area of *Swarajya* thus provided a justified pretext to kick off yet another 'Janjira Campaign' by the Maratha King Shahuji in the year 1733. This campaign continued relentlessly for four years till the *Siddi* was cornered and obliged to agree to the terms dictated by the Marathas. Most of the details of this campaign could be found in the *Peshwa Daftar* records.[2] It should be understood here that this campaign was simultaneously initiated on land as well as on water in order to gain maximum advantage against the *Siddi*.

As the grand strategy of the Marathas (Peshwa) was to isolate the Siddi and then seek to destroy his power, the English and the Portuguese were kept in good humour. At the same time, it did not take long for the Maratha ruler to convince the Angre brothers Shekhoji and Sambhaji regarding the urgency of the need to destroy the *Siddi*. Before the campaign to reduce the *Siddi* could be initiated, other methods were also employed by the Marathas to strengthen their efforts. They tried to take advantage of the differences prevailing in the *Siddi* clan over the succession to the throne of Janjira, after the death of *Siddi* Rasool Khan in February 1733. One of the prominent *Siddi Sardars*, by the name Shekhji, was induced to throw his weight around the Maratha side.[3] Early in 1733, the campaign was finally initiated by dispatching contingent of troops under various Maratha Sardars towards Danda-Rajpuri.[4] It seems that the *Siddi* was caught unaware as he took to heels without offering a fight to the Maratha troops which had made their appearance quite suddenly. Rajpuri and Khokri were occupied and a *Siddi* fleet harboured in the port of Danda-Rajpuri also fell into the hands of the Marathas.[5] After Danda-Rajpuri, the next target of the Marathas was obviously the invincible sea-fortress of Janjira. The action against Janjira required more imagination on the part of the Maratha leadership as it was not only situated in the midst of water, but was also secured by effective artillery which could harass any enemy activity at the coast and fort of Danda-Rajpuri. A simultaneous action from the sea-front was also required, so that the *Siddi* could be engaged on two fronts. It is interesting to note that the English at Bombay were keenly following the course of events and appeared to be greatly anxious and concerned regarding the fate of the *Siddi*. In one of the meetings of the Bombay Council dated 13th July, 1733 it is recorded thus, "The President observes to the Board the great progress that Shahu Raja forces, being joined with those of Angre, have made in the reduction of the *Siddi*'s country to their obedience since the death of Nawab Yakut (Rasool) Khan, which is more owing to the dissensions of the *Siddi* officers than the force of their arm. However, it is certain that they have gotten into their possession the town of Rajapur and a sort of fortress of Kokri with all the *Siddi* fleet and galvats, their war like stores, and nothing but the fort upon the island in that harbour holds out against them... and we have certain intelligence that another separate body of the Shahu Raja's forces are ordered to march against Anjanwel and two other of the *Siddi*'s forts to the southward..."[6]

By the time the Maratha contingent had laid siege to Danda-Rajpuri and had planned a simultaneous naval action, monsoon had already set-in. Hence, Shekhoji Angre, the *Sarkhel*, expressed his inability to make use of his fleet in view of the turbulent weather and rough sea.[7] At the same time, it seems that Shekhoji did not want to take any risk by committing his navy at Janjira as he feared a *Siddi* counter-offensive on his territory in the Ratnagiri region.[8] Shekhoji, instead, brought forth his own plan of action against the *Siddi*. According to this plan, the Maratha Admiral was to lead a naval attack and put pressure on the *Siddi* stronghold of Underi near Kulaba, while the Maratha Pratinidhi was to put pressure on Anjanwel.[9] Stressing upon the importance of capturing Underi, Shekhoji, in another communication to the Peshwa dated the 31st May, 1733, likens the sea forts of Underi and Anjanwel as the hands and legs of the *Siddi*'s fort of Janjira. He further writes that like Janjira, Underi is also quite difficult to capture.[10] In this way, this letter reveals the vital position of the forts in the overall strategy of the *Siddi*. In yet, another letters to the Peshwa in the month of June, however, Shekhoji Angre discusses the futility of besieging the Siddi fort of Danda-Rajpuri without enforcing naval blockade of Janjira.[11] At the same time, he also tends to soothe the Peshwa by writing that he did not expect any chances of an open attack by the *Siddi* on the Peshwa's troops which laid siege to Danda-Rajpuri.[12] These communications also give the impression that Shekhoji Angre was trying to avoid risking his fleet in this action, till the time the Monsoon was over.[13] Being a naval commander, he was fully justified in doing so, as it rains furiously during the monsoon season in the Konkan.

During the monsoon, however, the combined action against the *Siddi* at Underi was taken at hand. As a preemptive measure, Chaul was attacked[14] first and a Maratha contingent led by one Tukdoji Kadu succeeded in destroying the *Siddi*/Mughal hold in and around Kulaba.[15] Shekhoji Angre then concentrated on the reduction of the *Siddi* fort of Thal and Rewas in collaboration with the Peshwa's troops.[16] For the reduction of these forts, guns and batteries were strategically positioned along the coast to gain maximum advantage. The *Siddi* was also resolute in counter-offensive as the gun-fire from the forts, and also from Underi, inflicted a great deal of damage to the combined Maratha forces on land. An intensive contest for the forts could be seen for a couple of days before the *Siddi* garrison finally fled from Thal to Underi.[17] On the heels of the success of Thal, Rewas was also occupied in the first week of July. The English were anxiously keeping track of all these events. The Bombay Council, in fact, appeared upset in one of their consultations regarding the intentions of Shekhoji Angre, 'who', the Council recorded, 'having taken the small fort of Ravnee (Rewas) on the river Pen and the larger fort of Thal situated on the western point of the south land that forms one side of this bay (Bombay), and contiguous to the island and fort of Underi, which place he is likewise preparing to attack as soon as the weather will permit him to make use of his galvats for that purpose. And if he should succeed in that attempt, he is entirely the master of the south entrance of this port, when it will be impossible for any small embarkations or ships of little force bound to this port to escape his galvats, and consequently an end put to the greatest part of our country trade...'"[18] It was logical for Shekhoji Angre now to concentrate his energies (naval) in order to capture the *Siddi* fort of Underi. It looked like a golden opportunity in view of his recent successes on the land. The Bombay Council too, anticipated the same. The Council felt 'indispensably obliged to use (their) utmost endeavours to prevent the island and fortress of Underi falling into the enemy's hands by succoring the same and preserving it either in the possession of the *Siddi* or taking it into the possession of (their) Honourable Masters by the *Siddi*'s consent, on condition, that if the heirs or successors of the late *Siddi* should be restored to their country, command and authority, and should desire the restitution of the fortress of Underi, the same shall be delivered up to them on their paying the full expense and charge the Honourable Company may be at in the preserving the said fortress with the usual interest thereon at the rate of 9%, but should the Maratha remain possessed of the *Siddi* territories without any hopes of their retrieving them, that then the fortress of Underi shall remain to the Honourable Company as their sole right and property.[19] This consultation reflects the meticulous calculations the Bombay council had done in order to prevent Shekhoji Angre to gain predominance in the mattes of the control of territory and water adjoining Bombay. It also becomes clear how the *Siddi* had always been a part of their scheme to check the Maratha power. At the same time, their desire to occupy Underi and keep it for themselves is also evident form the abovementioned record.

Sambhaji Angre, on the other hand, without wasting time after the fall of Thal and Rewas, initiated military action to reduce Underi. Batteries were erected at Thal and supporting artillery fire was given from Khanderi. The keepers of Khanderi were also instructed to keep a vigil on the movement of the *Siddi*'s vessels from Underi. The Maratha plan was to starve Underi to submission by preventing any relief reaching the fort. However, the plan got a severe jolt as a strong British naval contingent led by Captain Inchbird made way for Underi. A letter dated 14th of July 1733, from the head of the Bombay Council - Robert Cowan, authorized Captain James Inchbird as the Commander – in – Chief of the expedition 'designed for succouring and defending the fortress of Underi' against the common enemy… The Company's ship *Mary* with four other fighting galivats, along with 02 Ensigns, 04 Sergeants, 04 Corporals, 40 European musketeers, 60 *topasses* and a train of artillery, provisions and warlike stores were detailed with Captain Inchbird for this mission.[20] This letter is noteworthy not just because it contains the detailed plan of action for taking Underi from the *Siddi*, but it also gives us vital clue regarding the strategy and tactics for the ensuing naval battle with the Angres. An appraisal of this letter also convey to us that the English had become much matured in the matters of naval conflicts in the vicinity of coasts where the water-level was likely to be on the shallower side. The following crucial details could be gathered from this letter:-

(1) **Battle formation**: All the participating vessels should be kept under the protection of the ship *Mary*.

(2) **Advantage of Tide and Wind**: The landing (at Underi) should be made at the most commodious landing place taking advantage of the nature of tide and wind.

(3) **Use of Artillery/Firepower**: To make a thorough survey and examination of the island, its fortifications and the positioning of the ships/vessels having artillery guns accordingly, and to determine whether Underi was capable of defending itself from the bombardment coming from Khanderi and Thal.

(4) **Appreciation of Geographical Features of the Coastline**: The depth of water on all sides of the fort to be ascertained so as to calculate how near the enemy vessels can approach in order to batter it (the fort) by their prow or side guns to effect a breach.

(5) **Tactics as per Geographical Features**: If there is no sufficient depth of water, the enemy vessels (ghurabs) could not be in a position to do any execution without being, at the same time, exposed to the fort guns and the British galleys or grabs, whom they must always expect to watch their motion.

(6) **Landing of Troops to Force a Battle**: To secure and keep a watch on how the main gate and other points of entrance to the fort are secured; and whether or not, there is any place upon the island where the enemy may land a body of men and draw them up. This was felt necessary so as to make a regular attack without being exposed to the fire of the artillery of the fort, so as to frustrate their attempt.[21]

From a close examination of the English records it appears that the *Siddi* was already in touch with the Bombay authorities and had asked for the English help to counter the Maratha offensive at Danda-Rajpuri, Underi and Anjanwel.[22] Bombay, in fact, had convinced *Siddi* Ballal, the Commander of the Underi fort, that in the eventuality of the Maratha onslaught on Underi, 'the hoisting of English flag and the taking the island and fortress of Underi into the Company's immediate protection and defense will convince the enemy that we are fully determined to defend it and support it to the last...'[23] The English flag was accordingly hoisted atop the Underi fort on the 16th of June, 1733.[24] The turn of events in this manner was indeed frustrating for Shekhoji Angre who was inching close towards victory after having occupied Thal and Rewas on land. His designs were further hammered by the likelihood of the Portuguese throwing their weight in *Siddi*'s favour. The English also welcomed the inclusion of the Portuguese in their attempt to forestall the Maratha progress against the *Siddi* in the Konkan. A detailed plan was drawn as per which the Portuguese fleet was to engage the Maratha navy near Chaul, whereas the English were to direct their attack on the Angre stronghold of Kulaba. [25] As per the arrangements, a contingent of *Siddi* troops from Surat was to be dispatched to Danda-Rajpuri with succour to relieve the besieged *Siddi* garrison there.[26] By delivering simultaneous attacks at various points besieged by the Marathas, the allies intended to divert the attention of the Maratha troops and relieve the *Siddi* at Danda-Rajpuri. Shekhoji Angre, to counter the pressure arising from the joint front, thought of a superior plan to defeat that of the enemy's. He immediately got in touch with the Peshwa and revealed the blue-print of the Maratha naval counter-offensive, as conceived by him. As per his plan, the Maratha naval fleets stationed at Vijaydurg and Kulaba would converge at Kulaba and deter the enemy from executing a naval blockade of Kulaba. At the same time Bombay was to be blockaded and with a supporting action from the Maratha cavalry it should be taken. Shekhoji Angre had also made an appeal to the Peshwa to send him a strong contingent of cavalry so as to facilitate the accomplishment of this task.[27] The plan does not seem to have taken shape as the *Siddi* had further entered into an 'Offensive-Defensive' alliance with the English (See Appx – 1) to consolidate his position against Angre and the Marathas.[28] On the other hand, Shekhoji, too, did not want to take any chances. Hence, he had kept the diplomatic channels with the English open. It is believed that the English (at Bombay) responded positively to his overtures and expressed their wish for an amicable co-existence.[29] This was all about the developments on the northern (i.e., north-Konkan) front against the *Siddi* in the year 1733.

Elsewhere in the Konkan, the main thrust of the Maratha action was directed against the *Siddi* fort of Anjanwel. This coastal fort was strategically crucial for the exercise of authority on the coast as well as its surrounding waters. The fort of Gowalkot in its vicinity provided additional strength to Anjanwel. Hence it was imperative for any troop marching through land, to first undertake the reduction of Gowalkot before proceeding towards Anjanwel. Shahuji had assigned the Maratha *Pratinidhi* the task of capturing Anjanwel.[30] The *Pratinidhi* had, of late, acquired a strategic victory over the *Siddi* and obtained the prestigious fort of Raigad from the latter.[31] In the meanwhile, as the monsoon progressed, the difficulties of the Peshwa increased. Though, the Peshwa had been camping in front of Danda-Rajpuri for more than a month now, he could do little to restrict the movement of the enemy in the coastal waters. For want of a complementary naval action by the Angre, the Peshwa was quite helpless in enforcing a naval warfare/blockade on the *Siddi*.[32] Hence, the *Siddi* had no difficulty in transporting provisions from the coast to the fort of Janjira.[33] The Peshwa could do little but to wait for reinforcements. As such the furious monsoon had dampened the spirit of his camp, and the victory, too, was long in coming. At that juncture, the news of enemy reinforcement reaching the spot, made the Peshwa impatient. It is believed that he asked the Maratha King to abandon the campaign and make peace with the *Siddi* or urgently send reinforcements.[34] King Shahuji quickly responded to the situation and asked the Peshwa to hold the ground till the imperial reinforcement reached him. Umabai Dhabade and Damaji Gaikwad were accordingly asked by King Shahuji to prevent *Siddi* from sailing out of Surat with succor for Janjira.[35]

Shekhoji Angre knew that any success against the *Siddi* on the Konkan coast was going to benefit him in exclusivity as he was the appointed Maratha Admiral. With this inspiration in mind he had readily sent whatever small number of contingents he had. It is also interesting to note that the Peshwa, at the same time, did not want the *Pratinidhi* to get a firm footing and further success in that area. Hence he tried to convince Shekhoji not to offer any military assistance to the Pratinidhi's troops. By that time, however, a small contingent, with a couple of his experienced military commanders, was already employed by Shekhoji Angre to fight the *Siddi*. The Angre contingent achieved success in extracting the coastal fort of Bankot and the nearby fortress of Mandangad from the *Siddi*.[36] Shekhoji's men next turned their attention towards the coastal fort of Vijaygad which was located on the mouth of river Shastri facing the Maratha fort of Jaigad. One Babaji Mhaske was deputed to invest the fort of Vijaygad. He started with a continuous bombardment of the fort before storming it. He finally captured it at the end of June 1733.[37] Another contingent led by Bakaji Naik Mahadik collaborated with the

Pratinidhi's troops at Gowalkot. Mahadik had also taken along some guns (borrowed from the fort of Jaigad) to implement his siege with vigour. But the garrison of Gowalkot gave a tough resistance and the *Siddi* detachments tried to take the besiegers by surprise on many occasions. In the meanwhile, the *Pratinidhi* opened the channels of negotiations with the *Siddi* and invited the fort commander of Gowalkot for settlement of terms (of surrender).[38] The *Siddi*, however, did not agree to surrender Gowalkot on Pratinidhi's terms and the negotiations bore no fruits.[39] The Pratinidhi, as a result, undertook the task (of reduction of Gowalkot) afresh and asked for more reinforcements from the King. The rainy season and the non-availability of naval vessels, however, made the task of the Pratinidhi extremely difficult to accomplish. The Pratinidhi, in view of the above, asked Sambhaji Angre, the younger brother of Shekhoji Angre, to come to his aid with naval vessels.[40] While the talks were on with Sambhaji, the Maratha *Sarkhel* breathed his last at Kulaba.[41] In his place, Sambhaji Angre was appointed the new Maratha Admiral.[42]

The Peshwa as well as the Pratinidhi immediately applied to the new Maratha Admiral, and tried to convince him to side with their respective causes and help accomplish the bigger mission of the Maratha people (i.e. of the reduction of the *Siddi*). The newly crowned Admiral, however, seemed to be in no mood to oblige either of the two. His immediate priority seemed to be to March to Kulaba, take-over the command of the Maratha fleet and crew, and consolidate his hold over the Maratha naval set-up. He further rejected the Peshwa's proposal of a meeting at Danda-Rajpuri for the same.[43] Because of the cold response and formal replies of Sambhaji Angre regarding his participation in the Maratha campaign against the *Siddi*, the Pratinidhi got so annoyed with him that he even threatened to take military action against him.[44] However, Sambhaji appeared keener on taking his appointment first and 'having a feel of the situation', rather than committing himself anywhere. Under such circumstances, an encouraging outcome of the Maratha campaign against the *Siddi* appeared to be a remote possibility. The Peshwa, already feeling helpless and dejected,[45] decided to call-off his campaign at Danda-Rajpuri, putting the entire responsibility of the Maratha failure (against the *Siddi*) on Sambhaji Angre.[46] The Pratinidhi, too, was planning to wind-up his campaign, but not before giving the cause, one more try. Skirmishes between the *Siddi* and the Pratinidhi's troops could be witnessed frequently. The *Siddi* tactics was to harass the Maratha contingent by inflicting surprise on them. The Pratinidhi, therefore, made a determined counter-offensive on the *Siddi* at Gowalkot early in the month of October 1733. However, *Siddi* proved to be a better strategist this time as he made effective use of his naval vessels. In a swift action, five *Siddi* vessels landed troops down the coast causing the Maratha troops great damage as the latter were sandwiched between the fire from the pursuing *Siddi* troops and that of coming from the Gowalkot fort. As the *Siddi* intended to land more reinforcements, the Pratinidhi, realizing the complexity of the situation in the absence of a Maratha naval contingent, withdrew with his battered troops from Gowalkot. The Maratha contingent from Anjanwel was likewise recalled soon.[47] The chances of any further action, even by the Maratha navy, were put to rest by the very appearance of the English and the Portuguese fleet. From the letters and other correspondences of Sambhaji Angre, it appears that the European vessels had begun patrolling along the Konkan coast, thus making it difficult for his fleet from putting into the sea.[48]

The *Siddi* was thus free to choose his own course of action following the withdrawal of the Maratha troops. The *Siddi* first tried to recover the ground lost to the Marathas and gained success in re-capturing the fort of Bankot through a naval action. The *Siddi* followed up this success by investing the fort of Raigad which was lost to the Pratinidhi a few months back.[49] The *Siddi* offensive compelled the Marathas to rethink on their military campaign against them. Early in the month of March, 1734, the *Siddi* retook the coastal fort of Bankot by offensive action.[50] The Maratha troops further moved towards the forts of Gowalkot and Anjanwel. This time they appeared more determined to occupy it as compared to the last attempt. By the end of March 1734, both the forts were surrounded with the Maratha troops, field guns and cannons – all positioned at strategic places. The navy was also put into use for the first time in the campaign against the *Siddi*.[51] Despite the noticeable presence of the European patrolling vessels along the south Konkan coast, the naval ships of Sambhaji Angre managed to pierce through and sailed up to Anjanwel with the intent of battering the fort by cannonading it from the sea-side. The plan to take Anjanwel through a simultaneous action from land as well as water, however, could not make much progress because of bad weather. The Maratha vessels had to move to Vijaydurg for shelter and necessary repairs. In the meanwhile, with the setting of the monsoon season, the chances of the participation and cooperation of Maratha naval fleet became too bleak. Taking clue from the previous year's experience, the Maratha siege was lifted by the month of June without achieving anything concrete.[52] The campaign against the *Siddi* received a further jolt because of an intense conflict between Sambhaji Angre and his brother Manaji Angre. The Peshwa got a welcome chance to intervene in the family feud – that too, on behalf of Manaji Angre, the person not so justified in his actions. There is a great deal of literature referring to the fight between the Angre brothers,[53] but suffice here is to say that the end result was not so encouraging for the prospects of the Angre family who now enjoyed the hereditary position of Maratha Admiral – the '*Sarkhel*'. A patch-up between the Angre brothers was brought about because of the intervention of the Peshwa. The truce also brought about the real division of the office and power of the Maratha *Sarkhel*. Sambhaji Angre's authority was confined to the waters of South Konkan whereas Kulaba was given to Manaji Angre.

As the feud of the Angre brothers was brought to an amicable settlement, the Marathas once again could concentrate on the task of reducing the *Siddi* in the Konkan. The Maratha King realized well that without the cooperation of the Maratha navy, they could not achieve the objective of dividing the *Siddi*'s energy on two different fronts simultaneously. Without that a comprehensive success against the *Siddi* was not possible. King Shahu, therefore, immediately tried to placate Sambhaji Angre and convinced him to throw his weight around the Maratha offensive against the *Siddi*. Sambhaji Angre agreed to send a detachment of troops along with some pieces of artillery to assist the Maratha efforts on land.[54] But, much of the valuable time had been wasted by that time. It was the 'monsoon-season' once again. However, one Babaji Mhaske, the commander of the coastal fort Jaigad (under the control of Sambhaji Angre), persisted with his efforts throughout the monsoon and kept-up the pressure on Gowalkot,[55] thereby stretching the campaign to the next season i.e. post monsoon, 1735. Since the weather was now fair and naval vessels could be used, attempts were made, once again, by the Maratha King to get the willing naval cooperation of Sambhaji Angre in the reduction of Gowalkot and Anjanwel. One of the letters even gives a hint that in lieu of his naval assistance, Sambhaji was to be rewarded with the control of the Kulaba fort (actually held by Manaji Angre at that time).[56] However, as the luck/misfortune would have it, the prompt naval action initiated by the English, together with the Portuguese, deterred Sambhaji Angre's fleet to venture near Anjanwel and Gowalkot.[57] Moreover, the securities of Angre's marine forts were also exposed to the Europeans. Under such circumstances, Sambhaji decided not to provoke any battle with the Europeans and even recalled his troops to augment the defenses of his own marine forts.[58] Giving a twist to the situation and to disturb the equilibrium of power-equation on the Konkan coast, Sambhaji opened up the channels of communication with the *Siddi*. It is interesting to find that not only did Sambhaji solicit the *Siddi*'s cooperation in 'regaining' Kulaba, but also offered generous peace terms in lieu.[59] Sambhaji Angre had also reportedly conveyed to the Maratha King that 'the Konkan belonged to him and the *Siddi*', and that, it was none of the Raja's business to meddle.' Furthermore, Sambhaji Angre is alleged to have retorted that 'he was a pirate and owed allegiance to nobody'.[60]

The *Siddi* (*Siddi* Saat by name) - always shrewd in his disposition, took advantage of the differences amongst the Maratha nobility. He immediately pounced upon this (once in a life-time) opportunity and headed towards the north with a moderate fleet. It was the turn of Manaji Angre to get anxious now. Not only was Kulaba under threat, but the *Siddi* troops on land, led by *Siddi* Yakub, also threatened to re-occupy the forts of Thal and Rewas, lost a couple of years back to the Marathas. Panicked, Manaji applied to the Peshwa for immediate help. The Peshwa could also comprehend the complexity in the event of the *Siddi* success at Kulaba.[61] A strong detachment under his brother Chimaji Appa was, therefore, pressed into service in April 1736. The Marathas gained a brilliant success against the *Siddi* as the latter were routed in the battlefield.[62] In the heat of the success, the Peshwa, once again, mooted the idea of taking Gowalkot and Anjanwel. After the defeat of *Siddi* Saat, it all looked achievable too. A strong detachment under the Maratha Commander Pilaji Jadhav was pressed into service.[63] Pilaji, who had been in the thick of action at Gowalkot the previous year, went ahead and tried to enforce a total blockade of the fort this time. But for the want of corresponding naval action in support (Sambhaji Angre was not willing to lend a helping hand to Maratha troops), the blockade could not be enforced effectively. In the meanwhile, the monsoon set in, forcing suspension of the entire expedition. Wisdom prevailed, and the Maratha troops were recalled from Gowalkot and Anjanwel too.[64] *Siddi* was offered peace which he readily accepted. A treaty was signed between the *Siddi* and the Marathas on September 25th, 1736, which brought an end to the Maratha campaign against the masters of Janjira.[65] This treaty, though hailed as 'a complete triumph for Maratha diplomacy',[66] was a stark reminder of the fact that Janjira was not only invincible, but that any action against the *Siddi* along the coast required a meaningful participation of the Maratha Navy.

II

SUCCESS AT BASSEIN AND THE DIVISION OF ADMIRALTY: While the Maratha troops were working to reduce the *Siddi* to submission, they had simultaneously opened another war front against the Portuguese near Kalyan and Thane. It could be recollected that Kalyan was given to the Marathas as a part of their settlement with the Mughals in the year 1719-1720 (including the right to collect *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the six *subas* of the Deccan). The Maratha troops had kept Kalyan occupied since then. The natural desire of political expansion of the Marathas under the Peshwas had brought them into conflict with their Portuguese neighbours at Kalyan. Minor skirmishes between the two sides had started immediately after the Maratha occupation of Kalyan in 1720. However, such actions could be simply dismissed as tactical ploy for keeping the neighbourhood under pressure. The serious tussle between the two neighbours commenced at the time when the Marathas were on the offensive against the *Siddi* of Janjira (refer to the preceding section of the chapter). A few incidents during the course of the campaign brought the matter to such a critical point that the Marathas had to kick off a simultaneous military offensive. As a consequence of this campaign, the Portuguese received a severe set-back to their authority and power in the Konkan area. The Marathas, who were politically, ever-expanding under the leadership of the Peshwas, validated the offensive against the Portuguese on account of the following: - (a) Portuguese support to the *Siddi* of Janjira during the Maratha-*Siddi* conflict; (b) the Portuguese involvement in the internal-strife of the Angre family (for being on the wrong side of the Peshwa camp). The Peshwa's victory over the Nizam made him confident enough to use his energy and resources towards the reduction of the Portuguese authority in the Konkan.

When Ramchandra Mahadeo occupied Kalyan[67] on behalf of the Peshwa, the Portuguese rule was well established from Daman to Chaul in the north Konkan. Their possessions on land as well as along the coast[68] were well guarded by a chain of forts. The mouth of the various rivers and the creeks were well guarded by coastal and sea-forts. Though the Portuguese and the Marathas maintained an outwardly cordial relation as per the terms of a treaty of mutual understanding signed between them in the year 1724,[69] they were unable to honour it in the right spirit, for long. The Portuguese, in particular, were apparently more uneasy because of the way the events were unfolding in the recent years. The sudden rise of the Maratha Navy under Kanhoji Angre was troubling them, more so, because the foundations of the Portuguese empire in India (though on the course of decline in the 17th century), to a large extent, also rested on a strong and efficient navy. The death of Kanhoji Angre and the feud in the Angre family had given the Peshwa an opportunity to try his luck in the matters of navy and navigation too. Hence, when the Peshwa concluded a treaty with the Portuguese in the year 1732, apparently to bring to an end to all kinds of hostilities in and around the region of Kalyan, he looked more interested in the prospects of overseas trade and commerce for the Marathas.[70] However, contrary to the Maratha expectations, the Portuguese, under a new governor, started fortifying Thane early in 1734. To realize the cost of fortification, fresh taxes and services were levied on the people, who, according to Danvers, "in desperation, invited the Marathas to take possession of the island of Salsette."[71] Taking exceptions of the situation, it appears that the Peshwa had started planning an attack on the Portuguese.[72] However, before invading Salsette, Bajirao ensured that he had enough reasons to justify the Maratha offensive against the Portuguese. The Portuguese participation in the dispute of the Angre family and the dubious distinction earned by them when they offered military help to the *Siddi* against the Marathas (Manaji Angre), in the opinion of the Peshwa, were valid reasons to initiate a Maratha offensive on the Portuguese at Bassein. Moreover, the cause of the Hindu religion (in view of the numerous complaints regarding the Portuguese committing atrocities on the Hindu population in their territory) was also there to take such a step against the Portuguese.

In February 1737, Chimaji Appa, the younger brother of the Peshwa, was chosen to lead the Marathas and accomplish this task on behalf of the Peshwa. The Maratha action began on 26th March 1735, with an offensive on the Salsette Island. The Maratha troops descended down from Kalyan-Bhiwandi[73] and had marched secretly. By the evening they had crossed a ford near Kawle at low tide so as to gain entry to the island. They quickly positioned themselves in the adjoining areas of the fort. So swift was the Maratha action that the Portuguese were perturbed. The very next day nearly the entire garrison, including the Governor, sailed to the island of Karanja in order to save its life, leaving behind a small contingent of troops to hold on the fort.[74] In a couple of days the Maratha army had occupied almost the entire island of Salsette, baring the fort, so that the Portuguese were left with only Bandra, Versova, Karanja (Uran) and the Bassein castle.[75] That the British at Bombay anticipated such an offensive from the Marathas has been established form the perusal of their records. One of the British documents mentions that "Bajirao's real intention in attacking Thane and the passes near it was in order to facilitate their entrance on Salsette."[76] The British, however, were not only surprised by the quick action of the Marathas, but also got worried about the safety of their own holdings. Orders were issued to keep a tight vigil on the various outposts against possible Maratha incursion.[77] At the same time Bombay also wrote to Chimaji Appa offering to mediate peace between the two parties.[78]

On the other hand, the Marathas, encouraged by their success at Salsette, thought of completing their victory by capturing Bassein too. But that was not going to be an easy task as the physical features of the Bombay Island and its surroundings were much different as compared to what we see today. There were so many islands, creeks and fords (many of them – strongly fortified by the Europeans) to be captured or secured before a complete dominance over the islands of Salsette and Bassein. For example, in the east of Bombay were situated Karanja, Gharapuri and Trombay islets; in the north, was the island of Bandra; to the east of Bandra was the strong fort of Marol; Versova and Malad were other fortified places on the coast. Off the coast, between Andheri and Bassein, laid a row of islands; near Bassein was the fortified island of Dharavi; beyond Bassein was situated the fort of Tarapur and Dahanu; on the opposite bank to Bassein, and guarding the southern mouth of the Ulhas river, was the fort of Ghodbandar (which even Shivaji had tried to capture in the past). In addition to these was the island fort of Arnala on the mouth of the river Waitarna.[79] These all, in addition to many adjoining villages and towns, formed a part of the Portuguese dominion in the north, near Salsette and Bassein.

But the Portuguese, aware of the implications of Maratha conquest in Salsette-Bassein, had become quite alert and had taken protective measures to counter the Maratha onslaught. Not only was the Portuguese governor at Goa appraised about the ground situation at Salsette-Bassein, but had also approached the English at Bombay for military as well as material help. The English at Bombay, on their part, were willing to provide succour to the Portuguese. For example, a timely reinforcement by the British at Bandra prevented the Marathas from capturing the fort.[80] In the mean-while, a strong Portuguese detachment from Goa could also find its way to the Bassein fort and successfully re-vitalized its defenders.[81] As a result, the Marathas were repulsed from Dharavi through a vigorous Portuguese offensive.[82] As could be gathered from the available documents, in both the instances, the main cause of the Maratha reverse could be attributed to their limitation in terms of the use of navy. The Marathas failed to control the creeks and inlets reaching these islands.[83] Though they had superiority in terms of manpower on the coasts opposite to those inlets, they were not sufficient to face the bombardment undertaken by the European ships from a distance. At the same time, in the absence of a naval contingent in those waters, the movement of the enemy ships carrying reinforcements could not be prevented. We also find that the Portuguese could successfully prolong the defense of Bassein because they could uninterruptedly use the waterways to supply food and necessary things to the fort till the end.

Elsewhere, the Marathas attention was concentrated on the island fort of Arnala which was, in fact, not properly defended. It is reported that early in April 1737, one Shankarji Phadke (who had also participated in the action against Bandra and Bassein), taking advantage of the absence of Portuguese naval vigilance, made use of some country vessels and managed to land his troops at the island of Arnala and occupied it after a summary resistance.[84] Strangely enough, Manaji Angre, with whom was vested the command of the Maratha fleet in the north Konkan (after the division of the office of the Maratha *Sarkhel*), was conspicuous by his absence in all these Maratha offensives. As regards the Bassein fort, it should be understood that it was not easy to capture it unless the Maratha Navy was used in a strategic manner. In the absence of a naval support (particularly – a supporting fire from them from the sea side), therefore, the Maratha troops had to try other methods to capture the fort. In the first instance they tried to put pressure on the English so as to prevent them from providing any kind of assistance to the besieged Portuguese. For example, the Marathas refused provisions to Bombay and detained several boats belonging to Bombay, which had been sent with money to procure batty from the nearby areas. They also seized some timber belonging to the Company at Thane after their capture of Thane.[85] Bombay was quite alarmed at the success of the Marathas and on the 30th of March, 1737, the council resolved to 'raise the breastworks opposite to each of those passes that can be commanded from the shore'. In addition, 'boats mounted with guns were to be positioned as near as possible to such passes as are not commanded from the shore'.[86] A the same time, to continue with their action against Bassein, the Marathas also attempted to scale the walls of the Bassein fort from different directions, even though they faced a vigorous fire being discharged from the fort. However, they could not succeed in entering the fort despite their repeated (and determined) attempts. As a result Bassein evaded from being taken.[87] The difficulties of the Marathas were further compounded by the fact that the Portuguese ships brought in succor from time to time and kept the garrison of the Bassein fort in high-spirits.[88] In the meanwhile, the Siddi island-fort of Underi was also threatened as Sambhaji had moved up with his fleet consisting of 'seven ghurabs and thirty galivats'.[89]

After the monsoon receded, the Maratha troops started afresh with a new strategy to reduce Bassein. They had learnt their lesson in the previous season – that Bassein could not be defeated till the time the supplies - reaching to the fort via sea, are clogged. Hence, the Marathas stayed behind at Dharavi throughout the monsoon. And, with the beginning of fair weather, they were seen augmenting the defenses of the island of Dharavi in such a manner that the Maratha guns and canons (fixed at the coast) could pose considerable impediments to the passage of any enemy ships towards Bassein.[90] But, the Portuguese were desperate to get back what they had lost in the previous monsoon. As the channel of communications via sea were open and reinforcement were handy, the newly appointed Portuguese captain of war for Bassein - Antonio Cardim De Froes, launched a vigorous counter-offensive on the Marathas positions at Dharavi, Arnala and other places of strategic importance in the month of February, 1738. The result was encouraging as the Marathas were beaten back at Dharavi early in the month of March.[91] In the renewed scheme of the Portuguese counter-offensive, their navy played a special role. Cardim understood the importance of Thane fort and planned to take it by stratagem. While the warships from Goa had brought enough of rice, supply and money to supplement the forts of Chaul, Karanja and Bassein,[92] it also sailed through the Thane creek as if to take the fort by storming it after effecting a landing of the troops. The Portuguese attempted a landing near Thane which was challenged by the Maratha troops. At that very moment, Cardim divided his fleet and made another landing some distance away from that position (in the rear of the Maratha troops). This contingent charged the Maratha fighters from the rear and surprised them. Yet another detachment moved further up and prevented the Maratha cavalry reinforcement from reaching the place of actual engagement.[93] The Portuguese, despite being numerically inferior, succeeded largely because of their superior strategy. Cardim wanted to extend his winning campaign by any means. Hence, he requested the English and the *Siddi* alike to help him in his endeavour to completely dislodge the Marathas from the vicinity of Salsette-Bassein. But the response of these parties was not very enthusiastic. The English, though willing to supply arms, ammunitions and such other warlike stores, declined to assist because of their own calculations. At the same time, the Goa council, because of its own compulsions, unfortunately declined Cardim's request of more supplies and reinforcement. Only *Siddi* cooperated for some time and fought jointly against the Marathas near Kamandurg.[94] This was, however, not enough to deter the Marathas who were prepared to resist every attempt to dislodge them from the areas they had occupied. The Marathas, on the other hand, got an upper hand at some other theaters of war. For example, they prevented the Portuguese attempt on Arnala and captured a few of the Portuguese vessels in its vicinity. At Dahanu also they fought well against the Portuguese. There was a temporary lull in the action due to a change in the leadership of the Portuguese. The Marathas utilized the time to strengthen their defense works at various strategic places like, Bahadurpura (near Bassein), Vajragad and Arnala etc. It was becoming evident that it would be difficult for the Portuguese to evict the Marathas holding such strong defensive positions, unless the Portuguese resources and efforts were concentrated on that front. But, on ground, the reinforcements from Goa were not too readily available as were required at that point of time. The matters for the Portuguese became more complicated as another person, by the name Pedro De Mello Mestro de Gampo, was given the command of the Portuguese troops as Cardim had walked out of the scene after resigning from his appointment.[95] The monsoon had also set in by that time. Under such circumstances, the new Portuguese commander thought it beneficial to establish peace with the Marathas.[96]

As the Monsoon was over, the Marathas prepared afresh to reduce Bassein. The Portuguese, on the other hand, also made attempts to advance against the Maratha position. Unfortunately, however, while attempting to advance against the Thane fort (which was occupied by the Marathas), the Portuguese general was killed by a chance shot coming from the fort.[97] In the meanwhile, the Maratha troops started swelling in number in the month of November-December, 1738. This happened on two accounts. First, the Peshwa, in person, was there to direct the operations which, he believed, were in its final stages. It should be noted here that the Peshwa had been busy for the last couple of years against the Nizam. Now he was free to devote his energy and resources against the Portuguese. The second was the re-joining of Chimaji Appa, who had returned from Poona where he gone to recover from ill health.[98] The Peshwa did not take time to assess the ground situation and came to conclusion that for a successful operation against the Portuguese, a few prerequisites have to be ensured. They were: (1) the total cooperation and coordination of the available naval units with the army; and (2) huge quantities of arms and ammunitions (for a sustained offensive). To ensure these, the Peshwa requisitioned Manaji Angre with his fleet to cooperate and compliment the Maratha action on land. At the same time, the Maratha foundries at Poona, Kalyan and Bhiwandi were directed to produce ammunitions on a large scale.[99] As a part of the grand overall strategy of the Peshwa, the Portuguese dominions across the Konkan coast were attacked simultaneously. With the purpose of dividing the Portuguese attention from the north, the invasion of Goa was taken at hand early in January 1739, under the command of one Venkatrao Ghorpade.[100] The contemporary Portuguese documents also mention that Venkatrao Ghorpade had also convinced Sambhaji Angre to join him in the invasion of Goa.[101] The Portuguese least expected this sort of maneuvering from the Marathas. They were surprised and were in fact, threatened with the loss of Goa because of the swift and determined Maratha action. They applied for peace.[102] The Marathas utilized this opportunity and used it in such a tactful manner that Goa could not send any relief to Bassein. At the same time, being sure of the fact that possibility of a naval reinforcement from Goa was remote, Manaji Angre applied himself and taking advantage of the situation, captured the island of Karanja.[103] Chimaji Appa, on the other hand, had launched a vigorous offensive near Bassein late in December 1738. Mahim was the first fort to fall to the Marathas in January 1739.[104] Along the coast, Dahanu was the next to fall,[105] however, Tarapur, which was besieged by Chimaji Appa's men, defied the Maratha pressure for quite some time. But, after a week-long fight, and with heavy casualties on both the sides, Tarapur finally gave up and surrendered to the Marathas.[106] After the submission of Versova on the 9th February, 1739,[107] the Marathas turned their attention to the island of Dharavi which was of much strategic value for the fort of Bassein. The Marathas were systematic in their approach while planning against the fort of Dharavi. They began by making arrangements to physically guard the creek so as to prevent any reinforcement of the enemy coming through that way. Moreover, to restrict the movement of the enemy ships and to prevent them from landing troops, batteries of guns were erected alongside the creek.[108] At the same time, preparations were made to batter the fort through a vigorous bombardment. Guns, canons and batteries were directed towards the fort despite the perceptible dangers. The action began when the stage was set. Dharavi could not take the canon-shots for long, and after a fortnight of resistance, it surrendered to the Marathas, early in the month of March.[109]

The Portuguese were loosing their ground quickly and the Marathas were closing-in at a swift rate. It was a situation of alarm for the Portuguese as their losses were getting converted into Maratha gains. Hence, to disallow any further gain to the Marathas, the Portuguese decided to dismantle their remaining forts in the vicinity of Bassein. The fortifications at Bandra were accordingly dismantled, apparently with the consultation and collaboration of the English of Bombay.[110] Bombay was, as such, quite uneasy at the prospects of the fall of Bassein. Hence, in response to the Portuguese request of a loan of Rupees 100,000/- and ammunition, it decided to advance a loan of Rupees 15,000/- (without interest) and also 'lend whatever brass guns are not absolutely necessary...'[111] The Portuguese, thus stepped up their preparations for the defense of Bassein. Cannons and guns were mounted on the walls of the fort[112] as almost all the nearby outposts were either occupied by the Marathas or were demolished by the Portuguese themselves. While these preparations were going on, Manaji had positioned his naval vessels in a strategic manner so that the approaches to these islands were almost blocked.[113]

The Maratha troops, in the meanwhile, were almost in the final stages of their preparations which were required for the reduction of the Bassein fort. Under the cover of their cannons, the work of laying mines under the foundation walls of the fort was taken up by the Marathas at a great speed. The Portuguese garrison, to thwart the Maratha action, cannonaded and showered a continuous barrage of fire from the fort, but failed to deter them. The Marathas, knowing well the significance of the fort, acted as a highly motivated body, and completed the mining work unmindful of the Portuguese artillery fire. In the morning of the 13th of May 1739, the mines were detonated. It caused a big explosion which created a breach in the fort wall. At the very sight of it, the raring Maratha soldiers and horsemen charged towards the fort with a great momentum.[114] However, the Portuguese offered a gallant resistance, and by directing their artillery fire on them, they managed to push the Marathas back. The very next day, with the explosion of a couple of more mines, the defenses of the fort were decisively breached. The audacious Maratha soldiers once again charged with ferocity and rendered the task of the defenders the fort very difficult this time. There was a keen fight between the two sides for two successive days causing heavy casualties on both sides.[115] In the end, the Marathas emerged victorious and got hold of the fort of Bassein.[116] This victory, in a true sense, made the Marathas the masters of the entire north Konkan coast. To quote Danvers, "They (the Marathas) acquired the entire northern province from Versova to Daman, with four chief ports, 340 villages and a revenue of Rupees 2,50,000/-. They gained, besides Bassein, eight cities, 20 fortresses, two fortified hills, the famous island of Salsette with the city of the same name and the island of Arnala escaped as also Chaul and Diu..."[117] This had all become possible because of a superior strategy of the Peshwa. Hence, it was expected that the Peshwa would now exercise his absolute control over the Konkan coast. But, as the Peshwa did not possess a navy, it was also obvious that on his behalf, Manaji Angre would establish the Maratha sovereignty over the surrounding waters of the Konkan coast. Close on the heels of the Maratha success in Bassein, Manaji

Angre, therefore, in order to realize his dream of 'an extended sovereignty over the Konkan Coast', laid siege to Chaul in April 1740.[118] However, owing to the determination of the Portuguese, he had to lift the siege of Chaul in October, 1740.[119]

It must be added here that the Portuguese, by then, had a better idea of the practical difficulties and limitations experienced during the war. One amongst them was the task of the security of the numerous coastal pockets in the Konkan in the face of a strong neighbour of the stature of the Maratha Peshwa. They could discern that it was going to be a Herculean task to get back their lost possessions on the Konkan in the immediate future. Hence, the Portuguese decided in favour of concentrating on their territorial possessions at Daman, Diu and Goa respectively. They also made an attempt to dispose off some of their belongings like Chaul. The idea of selling Chaul was not new. The British documents reflect that during the Maratha offensive on Salsette-Bassein the Portuguese had proposed to transfer Chaul to the Bombay authorities in lieu of their help. Bombay, however refused to accept this offer because of practical considerations as they were still not convinced of their ability to match the resources and numbers of the Marathas in case the latter became hostile. When Goa was invaded by the Peshwa's troops early in the year 1739, the Portuguese Viceroy even offered to handover the Chaul fort to the Dutch provided the Dutch armada helped them against the Maratha attack.[120] Not only Chaul, but the suggestion of surrendering Revadanda and Bassein (to a third party) out of 'helplessness' was also mooted at a meeting of the Councillors of the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa, at the same time.[121] It is evident that after the conclusion of a treaty with the Marathas in the wake of the fall of Bassein, the Portuguese, (once again) offered Chaul to the British. But the British convinced the Portuguese to hand it over to the Marathas (Peshwa) instead. Through the mediation of Captain Inchbird, the Portuguese, thus, handed over Revadanda, Chaul and Korlai to the Marathas in return for Cuncolim and Assolnem near Goa on 25th November, 1740.[122] Commenting upon the defeat of the Siddi and the Portuguese late in the 1730s, Lakshmi Subramanian writes, "In the North (Konkan), the fall of Bassein to the Marathas in 1739 completed the political revolution. The Maratha power in the Konkan was an accomplished historical reality, and its implications could not be neglected by other powers in the Konkan. The English had been forced to remain silent spectators to these events. Beyond professions of friendship and co-operation with the Portuguese, they did not dare take any other initiative."[123] The English, however, soon got a chance to establish their absolute control over the Konkan waters. The opportunity was provided by none other than the ever-ambitious Peshwa, who sought the British military and naval cooperation to destroy the Angre power.

IV

THE PESHWA AT THE HELM OF AFFAIRS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF TULAJI ANGRE: After the death of Kanhoji Angre, the fortunes of the Maratha Navy under the house of Angres fluctuated precariously before being finally ruined by the direct involvement of the Peshwa. Kanhoji's son and successor, Shekhoji Angre, had continued the legacy of his father in the matters of navigation and the exercise of Maratha naval authority over the coastal waters in the Konkan. However, his sudden and untimely death brought to the fore the struggle for power among his other brothers. What was more disastrous for the house of Angres was the ugly means adopted by them to cling to power which included even the involvement of some of their enemies in the struggle for power. Shekhoji Angre was succeeded by his younger brother Sambhaji Angre, who proved to be equally energetic and efficient as the Maratha *Sarkhel.* But, the revolt of his younger brother Manaji Angre, and the latter's virtually knocking the doors of the Peshwa for the 'redressal of his grievances' (against his brother Sambhaji Angre) marked the inauguration of such a process of internal strife in the Angre family that it led to the downfall of the authority of the Angre clan as the Maratha *Sarkhel.* It is interesting to note that the Peshwa emerged as the most interested party in this power-struggle between the Angre brothers. The Peshwa not only actively participated in it, but also simultaneously worked to bring about an end to the monopoly of the house of the Angre over the naval affairs of the Maratha Empire. The Maratha navy was destroyed as the Peshwa collaborated with the British. Together, they attacked and burnt a large portion of the Maratha fleet. The action of the Peshwa may be attributed to his short-sightedness, in specific; and the 'continental outlook' of the Marathas as an empire builder in the 18th century, in general.

It may be recollected that the first Peshwa Balaji Visvanath was a close friend of Kanhoji Angre. The newly appointed Peshwa (November, 1713) of the *Swarajya* got busy in the process of consolidating the hold of the Maratha state over the areas which once constituted the Maratha *Swarajya* under Shivaji. His first task was to get Kanhoji Angre, the naval chief who had participated in the civil war from the side of Tarabai to the side of Shahuji. With the persuasion of the Peshwa, Kanhoji Angre agreed to serve the Chhatrapati as his *Sarkhel*. In return, he was granted the possession of many a prominent coastal forts. While Kanhoji Angre was working to extend the Maratha sovereignty over the coastal waters of the Maratha territory and elsewhere, on land, the Maratha power had expanded considerably under the Peshwas. In the matters of territorial administration of the Maratha Empire, the second Peshwa, Baji Rao (1720-1740), had laid the foundations of 'Maratha Confederacy'.[124] In this system, the Maratha Chieftains operating in the distant areas (especially in the plain - like Gujarat, Malwa etc.) experienced little interference in their day-to-day affairs from Satara. They were given freedom to rule the territory they gained, allowed to retain part of the levy they collected, and given *Vatans* to ensure that they brought more land under the Maratha rule. Similar conditions applied to the Konkan too, where Kanhoji Angre, due to his naval acumen and daring exploits, was regarded as the virtual ruler. Under such a system, though the threat of dissidence and separatism could not be ruled out, the energetic Peshwa tried his best to maintain a balance. Still, the most difficult task the Peshwa faced was to hold these Chieftains together for the cause of the Marathas, as well as for the gratification of his own authority. In fact, the Peshwa needed to apply himself tactfully wherever he would fail by coercion or persuasion.

It is true that neither Balaji Visvanath, nor his successor Bajirao took any keen interest in developing the naval establishment and project Maratha sovereignty on the sea. The onus fell on Kanhoji Angre to ensure that the Maratha Navy too helped in the exercise of the Maratha authority on the Konkan coast and its adjoining waters. Hence, over the years, Kanhoji Angre as the Maratha Admiral, fought naval wars, fortified a number of places on the west coast and enhanced the efficiency of his fighting vessels. Though, in this process both - Balaji Visvanath, and later on, Baji Rao, were found willing to support him from land, whenever needed. After the death of Kanhoji Angre, his son Shekhoji succeeded to the post of the Maratha *Sarkhel*. In the previous section, we have already discussed about the working relations between the land and sea forces of the Maratha Empire during the military campaign against the *Siddi* of Janjira. During the course of the campaign, however, Shekhoji had died. After him, it was Sambhaji Angre, the younger brother of Shekhoji, who succeeded him as the Maratha *Sarkhel*. In the meanwhile, the campaign against the *Siddi* continued. During the campaign, one of the actions of the Peshwa gives us the idea as to how much he disliked the new Maratha *Sarkhel* Sambhaji. The Peshwa, who had taken possession of the fort of Rajkot from Sambhaji Angre for the operational requirements against the *Siddi* of Janjira, handed it over to the latter's estranged brother Manaji Angre, despite the opposition of Sambhaji Angre,[125] before returning back to Poona. Manaji Angre, it should be kept in mind, was not contented with the treatment meted out to him by his brother Sambhaji Angre, and had approached the Peshwa for the 'redressal of his grievances'. The decision of the Peshwa to favour Manaji Angre in the internal strife of the Angre family had a profound impact on the future of the Maratha Navy. The Peshwa subsequently created a new post of *Wazarat Ma-Aab* and brought about a division in the office of the Admiralty of Maratha Empire. The Maratha naval establishment was divided amongst the two brothers Sambhaji and Manaji Angre. While Sambhaji Angre continued with the hereditary title of the *Sarkhel*, the latter was appointed as the *Wazarat Ma- Aab*. Manaji Angre was also given the control of the prestigious fort of Kulaba.[126] The rift between the Angre brothers widened thereafter, since Manaji Angre acted as the protégée of the Maratha Peshwa. Sambhaji Angre, nonetheless, made his intentions clear that he was not going to be cowed down by the Peshwa, or for that matter his estranged brother Manaji. Heedless of their association, Sambhaji Angre indulged in open acts of hostility against the Peshwa, or his agents, or even his estranged brother Manaji Angre, whenever he would get a chance. His natural target was the fort of Kulaba, which he wanted to occupy at any cost. It is said that in 1737, he made a common cause with the Portuguese and attacked Kulaba.[127] However, the attack was successfully repulsed back. In 1740, Sambhaji Angre again threatened Kulaba and put pressure on Manaji. The Peshwa, once again, came in between Sambhaji Angre and victory.[128] The Portuguese responses to the actions of Sambhaji Angre were not clear either. On the one hand, they feared that Chaul would be threatened in the eventuality of Sambhaji's success at Kulaba, hence they dispatched aid to Manaji Angre; on the other, the Portuguese governor of Chaul also permitted Sambhaji's fleet carrying provisions from Suvarnadurg (to Kulaba) to lay anchor in his fort.[129] In other words, the Portuguese response towards Sambhaji during this period was indicative of the fact that they did not want to follow the policy of open hostility towards the Maratha *Sarkhel*. Sambhaji used this situation to further his ambitions on the Konkan waters. He, in 1738, attacked the Dutch shipping and seized two of their vessels. The Dutch, in reprisal, sent their fleet to Gheria (Vijaydurg), but it failed to make any impact against the strong walls of the fort.[130]

The Peshwa, on the other hand, also understood the pre-dominant position of Sambhaji Angre. Hence, as peace was signed between the Portuguese and the Maratha after the fall of Bassein in March 1740 (by that time the Portuguese had lost Bassein to the Marathas), the Peshwa was careful enough to make some arrangements to deal with the Maratha *Sarkhel* through this pact. One of the articles of the pact, therefore, concerned the Angre threat (Sambhaji Angre, in particular). It reads, 'the Portuguese should aid the Marathas in the event of a conflict with the Angre...'[131] It was probably for this consideration that the Portuguese did not assist Sambhaji Angre when the latter attacked Kulaba in 1740. This attitude of the Portuguese, forced Sambhaji Angre to immediately commence hostilities against them.[132] On the other hand, some other contemporary Marathi documents give us the idea that Sambhaji had sought the neutrality of the British, Portuguese and the Siddi of Janjira, in his war with Manaji Angre.[133] Sambhaji Angre's attempts to capture Kulaba were further frustrated because of the favourable disposition of the British (at Bombay) towards Manaji Angre in the wake of the fall of Bassein. Bombay, in fact, was actively involved in the mediation of peace between the Peshwa and the Portuguese.

The ambitions of the Peshwa were soaring new heights. It seems he wanted to have a free hand in the newly acquired coastal territories (Bassein etc.) from the Portuguese. On the other hand, Manaji Angre also suspected the intentions of the Peshwa. Hence, while peace was being mediated between the Peshwa and the Portuguese, symptoms of mutual distrust between the Peshwa and Manaji Angre had also surfaced up.[134] From the perusal of the contemporary documents it appears that when the terms of treaty with the Portuguese were being finalized, Manaji Angre got anxious about the fate of the coastal forts of Revadanda and Korlai as he got the indications that they were being transferred to the Peshwa. He tried hard to prevent the Portuguese from handing over these forts to the Peshwa. He even tried to convince the Viceroy by writing to him that if they (Portuguese) kept those forts with them, he would bear the expenditure for their maintenance.[135] That Manaji Angre was being side-lined in the dealings of the Peshwa is also evident from the contemporary English records. The English, at that time, were also mediating for a peace between the Marathas and the Portuguese in the aftermath of the fall of Salsette-Bassein, as noted earlier (previous section). But in the role of the mediator, they were facing a practical complexity. While they mediated peace for the Marathas, Manaji Angre was not involved in the deliberations even though the matter concerned naval issues. Manaji was annoyed because of this and initiated a series of offensives against Bombay shipping and English territories. In the month of November, he occupied the island of Elephanta, hoisted his own flag there and fortified it with a redoubt by the water side and a small fort against the hill.[136] The English, though suspected the tacit approval of the Peshwa behind Manaji Angre's action, remained poised. Despite all these, the English tried to prove their sincerity towards the Marathas through their unending diplomatic maneuvers. In connection with the transfer of the Portuguese forts of Chaul and Mhar, the Bombay Governor's letter to Captain Inchbird, the main mediator of peace between the Marathas and the Portuguese, is a clear reflection of such a policy of the English. He writes, "You (Captain Inchbird) are to remark to them (the Marathas) that we cannot give greater proof of the sincerity of our assurance of friendship, than putting into their hands so strong a hold and so strong a sea-port, which must prove that we have no views of extending our dominions, or seeking to establish new fortresses in their country, since we voluntarily and manifestly part with so fair an occasion."[137] Manaji also applied pressure on the Portuguese Chaul in the meanwhile.[138] However, the Portuguese were now stubborn in their resistance as they had more men and resources (after the fall of Bassein, Karanja and transfer of some other coastal pockets to the Marathas etc.). After a futile siege of a couple of months, Manaji Angre withdrew from Chaul.[139]

While these settlements were being finalized, Sambhaji Angre, along with his brother Tulaji Angre, moved up with a fleet consisting of about fifty galvats and two ghurabs and attacked Kulaba once again. Sambhaji Angre managed to land his men on the coast and attacked Manaji's territory on the coast. In a swift action, he took Alibag, Thal, Sagargad and laid siege of Kulaba. The fort of Hirakot was also invested vigorously by Tulaji Angre and it seemed as if Manaji Angre's authority from Kulaba would soon come to an end. However, the Peshwa and his brother Chimaji Appa quickly rushed to the rescue of Manaji Angre in April 1740. It was at the same time that the British at Bombay, because of their own contemplations regarding the safety and security of Bombay, resolved to bail-out Manaji Angre of the critical situation. Captain Inchbird, with a small contingent of vessels and crew appeared off the Kulaba coast. The English fleet not only chased the vessels of Sambhaji Angre away, but also simultaneously carried-out a vigorous cannonading over the besieging troops of Sambhaji Angre around the fort of Kulaba. As a result, the latter had to retreat inland. In the meanwhile, the Peshwa's troops had also arrived closer to Kulaba. The situation, thus, became critical for Sambhaji Angre as he was nearly trapped in between the English on the sea side and the Peshwa's troops on the land. He immediately applied for peace with the English, but his request was not entertained. His brother Tulaji was also captured in the action with the Maratha troops. Moreover, as the likelihood of the retreat of Sambhaji's own troops was threatened, he offered peace to his estranged brother Manaji. Interestingly enough, Manaji Angre agreed to patch-up with his belligerent brother. He facilitated a safe return of Sambhaji Angre along with his troops to his own territories in the south Konkan as the latter gave up all the conquered territories near Kulaba.[140] It may be pointed out here that the decision of Manaji Angre to patch-up with Sambhaji Angre was not due to the blood ties or brotherly affections, but because of the recent developments which posed a greater threat to his own authority from the Peshwa. The wily Peshwa had made the best use of the situation created because of the attack of Sambhaji Angre on Kulaba. While the retreat of Sambhaji Angre was blocked by the English fleet and Peshwa's troops from the sea and land respectively, hoards of the Peshwa's troops had swiftly landed at the islands of Karanja and Elephanta and chased Manaji Angre's garrison away from there.[141] This was a big blow to Manaji's naval ambitions. He understood the intentions of the Peshwa well; hence, he quickly made peace with Sambhaji Angre to offset the Peshwa's move. Since it was difficult for Manaji Angre to stop thinking about the ramifications of the loss of Karanja and Elephanta, he made an appeal to Bombay to recommend the Marathas to restore to him the islands they had taken. He even suggested a confederacy of the English, the *Siddi*, the Portuguese, and himself against the Marathas, but the English Company did not find the suggestion meaningful to be considered.[142] Manaji Angre's relations with the Peshwa were not on the better side in future too. Manaji was always looking forward to deprive the Peshwa of the gains he had made on the Konkan coast in the recent past. With this intention, in the year 1745, Manaji Angre wrote to the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa regarding his intentions of providing assistance to the Portuguese in case they wanted to retake the islands of Karanja and Bassein from the Peshwa.[143] A positive reply from the Portuguese was not expected though, as they understood the practical difficulty of holding such places of importance in a hostile surrounding. However, the above-mentioned letter of Manaji Angre amplifies the fact that he was not comfortable with the Peshwa's troops surrounding his coastal possessions, and that his relations with the Peshwa were not on very agreeable terms. In any case, Manaji Angre continued to serve as the *Wazarat Ma-Aab* of the Maratha Chhatrapati.

On the other hand, after his failure to take Kulaba, Sambhaji Angre returned back to the south Konkan and concentrated on the expansion of his authority there. It seems that he was carrying along with the Portuguese quite well as both sides were desirous of a long term settlement for mutual benefits. In 1742, however, Sambhaji Angre died after a brief illness.[144] It is interesting to note that Manaji Angre immediately approached the Chhatrapati and preferred his 'legitimate' claim to the post of the Maratha *Sarkhel* to that of his brother Tulaji Angre. Shahuji, it seems, had laid down a condition that the post of the Maratha *Sarkhel* would remain with that member of the Angre family who would conquer the forts of Anjanwel and Gowalkot from the *Siddi* of Janjira. Tulaji Angre undertook and accomplished this task in the year 1745.[145] In this way Tulaji Angre was confirmed in the post of the Maratha Sarkhel.

Tulaji Angre was full of energy and ambition. From his headquarters at Vijaydurg, he sustained the legacy associated with the family of Kanhoji Angre. Tulaji

Angre was daring in his exploits; and now that he was the legally appointed Maratha *Sarkhel*, he was not willing to be influenced by anyone whether it was the Maratha Peshwa, or even the Europeans on the Konkan waters. In April, 1743, his galvats fearlessly attacked the English Ketch *Salmander*. More references of Tulaji's daring attacks on the British vessels of strength and economic value have been documented in the English Records. While describing such incidents, these documents also provide us an idea about the methods adopted to come out successful in such engagements. One such document mentions, "Not withstanding our continual fire from both – canons and small arms - the enemy boarded all round us..."[146] One can make out from the above mentioned reference that, in naval engagements, the Maratha tactics (to overcome their limitations in terms of fire-power) was to physically board the enemy vessel in large numbers and then fight wars on them. As noted above, the Siddi threat was further neutralized by Tulaji Angre as he had wrested Anjanwel from him. To further exhibit his naval prowess, Tulaji undertook a naval expedition to Mangalore in November 1746, and ravaged the area.[147] At the same time, the Maratha *Sarkhel*, for obvious strategic considerations, tried to be on workable terms with his Portuguese neighbours at Goa. It is reported that he had sent his naval commander Rudraji Dhulap to Goa to 'negotiate an alliance with the Portuguese'.[148] However, this does not seem to have worked as we find both the parties engaged in mutual hostilities after 1749.

The Portuguese, on the other hand, had genuine reasons to feel concerned in the wake of the recent successes achieved by Tulaji Angre against his enemies on the sea. In the year 1750, the Portuguese made an astonishing discovery that Tulaji Angre had been manufacturing new style cannon guns, very much akin to the Portuguese guns, in his territory. These were similar to the guns which the Portuguese had successfully used to destroy the power of the Sawants (including their armada) earlier on. It was concluded by the Portuguese administrators that a Portuguese gunner had deserted Goa and accepted a job under Tulaji Angre whom he (the gunner) passed on the information about these new style guns.[149] The above reference indicates that Tulaji Angre had also established a capable foundry and was gaining much in confidence, required to meet the European challenge. Other sources also confirm that Tulaji's crew consisted of Europeans in a large number.[150] A Portuguese document of the year 1747 also gives a hint of the numerical strength of the Tulaji Angre's fleet. This document mentions that the Angre's fleet consisted of 9 *Pals* and 60 galvats.[151] It is reported that with his fleet, Tulaji Angre raided the port of Mangalore, resorted to arson and plundered the town. He also caused considerable damage to the European shipping including those of the Dutch and the English anchored there. The Portuguese sources further add that Tulaji Angre unleashed terror and havoc at Mangalore uninterruptedly for two days. This incident took place in the month of December, 1746. In the meanwhile, the French were also trying to assert themselves in the Indian politics, particularly in the south. The English were alarmed at the progress of the French, and fearing for the safety of their settlements on the western coast, the English tried to reassure their friendship with the Peshwa.

On the other hand, the Maratha diplomacy and internal politics entered into a transitory phase of anxiousness after the death Chhatrapati Shahuji. Shahuji died childless in the year 1749. The death of Shahuji gave Tarabai, the widow of Chhatrapati Shivaji's second son Rajaram, the opportunity to rake up the issue of the 'legal' successor to the *Gaddi* of Satara. She was buttressing the claim of her grandson for the Maratha throne. But the Peshwa was the main impediment coming in way to this claim. Hence, Tarabai needed to get rid of the Peshwa by all means. To achieve this objective, she started hatching a political conspiracy with the help of the disgruntled Maratha nobility to bring about the downfall of the Peshwa. However, the crowning of Ram Raja, Tarabai's grandson, as the new King to the *Gaddi* of Satara put an end to all intrigues about succession, for the time being.[152] Still the situation was difficult for the Peshwa. He found that he was surrounded with more enemies than friends as the various influential Maratha Chieftains would not follow the dictates of the Peshwa in letter and spirit, in the absence of Shahuji. The Peshwa also found it difficult to run the administration smoothly because of the un-solicited interference of Tarabai. Before he could loose his grip over the situation, the Peshwa, however, devised a counter-strategy to deal with his detractors. With consummate diplomacy and showing commendable promptitude he soon got his way on the state affairs. He secured Raghuji Bhonsle in his favour by making concessions.[153] He took over, by an artifice, the fort of Simhagad from the *Pant Sachiv*.[154] The *Pratinidhi* was deprived of his office and his lands were confiscated.[155] Only Tarabai and her intrigues now remained to be dealt with. These things happened so fast that

Tarabai could not get the time to react. In order to consolidate her position against the Peshwa, Tarabai, took forcible possession of her grandson Ram Raja, the Maratha King and got him imprisoned. Furthermore, taking advantage of the Peshwa's absence (busy in a military campaign against the Nizam late in the year 1750), Tarabai and Umabai Dabhade - supported by Daimaji Gaikwad, made an attempt to supersede the Peshwa's authority. However, the Peshwa tactfully coerced Daimaji Gaikwad to join him against Tarabai. Tarabai, too, perceiving the hopelessness of the situation, came to an understanding with the Peshwa. As per an agreement between the two, the control of the Maratha King's person and establishment at Satara was placed at Tarabai's disposal.[156] The Peshwa was henceforth left the undisputed master of the Maratha Empire.

It is interesting to note that Tarabai had even sought the Portuguese military support to bring about the down fall of the Peshwa. As per the Portuguese sources Tarabai had asked the Portuguese to supply her with ammunitions and war-stores. One wonders whether the conspiracy against the Peshwa had stopped after the settlement was reached between Tarabai and the Peshwa. But, one thing was for sure, that Tulaji Angre was definitely paying no heeds to the authority of the Peshwa. As a Chieftain of the Maratha Confederacy, Tulaji Angre would refuse to pay the tribute due to him. The contemporary Marathi documents indicate that Tulaji Angre would refuse to entertain the claims of Ramaji Mahadev Biwalkar, the Martha *Subedar* of Konkan over the collection of tribute from the territories held by him. He has also started giving troubles to the 'Brahmin inhabitants' of the areas under his control.[157] Tulaji Angre would also act in unison with the Portuguese navy, and would make it difficult for the Peshwa's ships to ply particularly on the parts of the Konkan waters controlled by him. A letter dated 8th of February 1752, written by the Portuguese Viceroy's to Tulaji Angre, suggests that if Tulaji Angre provided a little military help, he would set-out with his armada to recover Salsette and Bassein.[158] The Peshwa, however, got a scent of these activities, and acted quickly. He became more resolute to tackle the 'recalcitrant' Tulaji Angre on a priority basis, so that the last challenge to his absolute authority over the Maratha Empire could be neutralized.

With this intention in mind, the Peshwa had appointed one Muzaffar Khan as the head of his navy. The Peshwa also looked forward to the Portuguese naval co-operation against Tulaji Angre, in conformity with the Portuguese-Maratha treaty of 1740 (signed at Poona after the fall of Bassein). The Portuguese records mention that Muzaffar Khan, in the capacity of the Peshwa's Admiral, and on behalf of the Peshwa, made a demand of guns and ammunitions from the Portuguese.[159] The Portuguese, though, did not show much interest in this deal, and on one pretext or the other - denied any such help to the Peshwa's agent. In the meanwhile, the Peshwa had also opened up channel of communication with the English at Bombay for the impending action against Tulaji Angre. The English, of late, had been further offended by the proud Maratha *Sarkhel.* In October 1749, Commodore James's fleet was attacked in a daring manner near the Angre stronghold of Vijaydurg. As per the English records, Tulaji managed to capture a ship 'Restoration' belonging to the British fleet. The same document further gives us an idea about the method used by the Marathas in this conflict. 'Restoration' was captured after the Maratha fighters boarded it and fought on board the ship. This was made possible after the said ship was surrounded from all sides by smaller Maratha vessels which **'struck the mast off'** the ship.[160] Much to his relief, the Peshwa found them more than eager to provide military help for the same.[161] As a result the Peshwa entered into an agreement with Bombay to secure their military (Naval) help to destroy Tulaji Angre's stronghold of Vijaydurg. The English action was justified as they had, after all, incurred heavy expenses (to the tune of Rs. 5,00,000 per year), to keep their trading channels (from Cochin in the south to Diu in the north) open and safe from the depredations of the Maratha navy and other 'pirates'.[162] In the ensuing action, Tulaji Angre eventually lost his strongholds of Suvarnadurg & Vijaydurg, and his armada was also destroyed in arson as explained in the following pages.

IV

DEFEAT OF TULAJI ANGRE AND THE 'FALL OF VIJAYDURG':

(A) BATTLE OF SUVARNADURG (1755 AD): Suvarnadurg and Vijaydurg were two of the toughest naval strongholds possessed by Tulaji Angre. In fact, to inflict a heavy blow to the power of Tulaji Angre, the Peshwa had approached British at Bombay with a proposal to attack and capture the fort of Vijaydurg. But the British, who were aware of the quantum of efforts and nature of preparations required to accomplish this particular job, hesitated in the first instance. They asked the Peshwa to put off this expedition in view of the approaching monsoon as the time would be too short to concentrate all resources.[163] However, the Peshwa, guided by an urgency to destroy Tulaji Angre, persuaded the English to initiate an offensive on Suvarnadurg. Planning and discussions were held to achieve this objective and in the month of March, 1755, a treaty was signed between the two parties regarding the contribution/share of military burden - each side would have to bear, as well as the spoils of the war. The terms of this treaty have been produced as an appendix (See Appx – 2) at the end of the chapter for ready reference. However, the gist of the agreement consists of the following: That the English would enforce a blockade of the sea while the Maratha troops carried out the attack on the forts of Jaigad, Anjanwel and Suvarnadurg from the land side. *Hence, at the outset, a two-pronged plan of action (simultaneous on land as well as on the water) was conceived.* This was deemed necessary for the success of the expedition as it would have prevented Tulaji Angre to provide succor and re-enforcements from the sea side. During this action the vessels of the Peshwa were to be placed under the command of the British (Unity of Command – a principal of warfare – vital to the success of any joint operation). Tulaji Angre, hence, was put into a tight spot, as he could ill afford to engage in a naval conflict with the English with his attention divided on the land fronts too. As per the division of spoils, it was agreed that the vessels that might be taken from Tulaji Angre, were to be divided by the captors, but the guns and stores were to belong entirely to the Peshwa. Bankot, with the fort of Himmatgad and the sovereignty of the river on which it stands, with five villages were to be ceded in perpetuity to the English.[164]

With such arrangements the Bombay Council decided ‘to fit out at once, what ships were in the harbour’, and send them to Suvarnadurg under Commodore William James. On 22nd of March, Commodore James sailed from Bombay. The British armada consisted of different types of vessels. Commodore James was in the ship ‘*Protector*’ carrying forty guns. It was accompanied by ‘*Swallow*’ with sixteen guns, a bomb-ketch named ‘*Viper*’, and a *Prahm* ‘*Triumph*’. On the 25th of March, he was joined by the Peshwa’s fleet near Chaul. As per the English records the Peshwa’s fleet consisted of seven ghurabs, one batella, and sixty galvats[165] – a considerable strength (in terms of numbers) by any standards. The combined fleet then sailed towards Tulaji Angre's stronghold of Suvarnadurg. Suvarnadurg, it should be recalled, was located amidst a group of fortresses, namely - Gova, Fatehdurg and Kanakdurg, on the coast. These forts constituted a strong line of defense for the island fort of Suvarnadurg. Hence, an attack from land was believed to be equally difficult. As per the scheme of the expedition, it was the sole responsibility of the Maratha troops under the guidance of Ramaji Mahadeo Pant, the *Sar-Subedar* of Konkan province of the Peshwa, to carry out an assault from land. To facilitate this, a landing of troops from the sea side was also deemed equally necessary.

The combined armada of Bombay and the Peshwa appeared in the vicinity of Suvarnadurg on the 29th of March. They easily overcame the resistance offered by the guarding vessels of Tulaji Angre. The Angre fleet of Rajapur, consisting of seven ghurabs and eleven galivats,[166] were chased away to quite a long distance, but the combined fleet could not succeed in taking anyone of them owing to their speed. At this point of time, Commodore James expressed his frustration at the 'unprofessional' conduct of the Peshwa's fleet.[167] It may not be entirely the fault of the Peshwa's fleet that they behaved in such a manner. On the contrary, it reflects, to a great extent, the inexperience of the Peshwa in the field of navy and naval operations. This was the first ever Maratha participation in a naval action where the seasoned naval commanders were not present. Moreover, it was a joint operation where the command too was vested in the British hands.

Despite these shortcomings, the combined fleet regrouped opposite the Suvarnadurg fort and, with the display of concentration of numbers, sealed the approach route via sea to the fort and the port by the same name. Ramaji Pant also succeeded in landing his men on the coast and raised battery of guns surrounding the fort and further diminished the chances of the fort getting any relief or reinforcement through land. After this, an offensive from the combined fleet was initiated; the proceedings of which are well recorded in one of the ship's log-books (See Appx – 3).[168] But, before the bombardment of the fort could be taken at hand, it was essential to place the bombing vessels closer to the fort so that the bombing could bring the desired result. As mentioned in Commodore James' report, he reconnoitered the surroundings of the Suvarnadurg fort and 'took the necessary soundings'. The movement of the tide was also monitored for a better appreciation of the conditions of the operation.[169] This implies that the English preparation was quite meticulous this time. At the same time it also reflects the urgency of their purpose. After the survey of the surroundings, Commodore James placed his bomber vessels '*Viper*' and '*Triumph*' in the vicinity of Suvarnadurg, where water was about four fathoms in depth. A vigorous bombarded on Suvarnadurg commenced from 2nd of April, although single-handedly by the English vessels. Commodore James also (annoyingly) reports that the Peshwa's vessels were lying out in five fathoms (i.e., comparatively farther from the fort with respect to the English vessels) 'in the most shameful manner' looking at us, even though 'I requested them several times (to come closer and participate in the bombardment)...'[170] The fort also returned fire in exchange, but no damage to the Bombay fleet was reported by Commodore James. At night Ramaji Pant, bringing a deserter from the fort, brought the news that in the bombardment undertaken by the British vessels, the Commander of the fort was killed. It was also brought to the notice of Commodore James that the side on which the fire of the bomb-vessels was directed, was all solid rock, hence the direction of fire needed to be changed to inflict meaningful damage to the fort.

The next day, therefore, Commodore James sailed forward with a fresh, more effective, but equally risky plan. He placed the British vessels strategically in between island fort of Suvarnadurg and the other coastal forts viz. Gova, Fatehdurg, Kanakdurg, etc. The vessel '*Protector*' commanded by James in person, was brought so close to Suvarnadurg that the guns on the upper deck were in a position to fire on the fort guards on the top of the fort. The side guns (broadside) of the vessel, at the same time engaged the mainland forts by commencing a relentless bombardment on them. The other vessels '*Viper*' and '*Triumph*' also supported the '*Protector*' and bombarded the forts of Gova, Fatehdurg and Kanakdurg simultaneously. The strategy of Commodore James worked. It is reported that by noon, a magazine exploded inside the Suvarnadurg fort and people started leaving the fort. The heavy bombardment from the sea-side made easy the work of the Maratha troops on land. As reported by Ramaji Pant in his letter to Bombay, "On the 4th April (1755), we vigorously attacked and carried the forts of Kanakdurg, Fatehgad and

Gova; and understanding Suvarnadurg to be in a very weak condition I, by land, attacked and made myself the master of its forts..."[171]

The quick and easy success over Suvarnadurg encouraged the Maratha camp to such an extent that it expressed the desire to continue with the expedition till the reduction of Vijaydurg. Correspondences were entertained between the Peshwa and the Bombay Council regarding this plan. But Bombay played cautious in view of the impending monsoon and the Bombay Council was not in favour of any such action till the next season. However, it granted the permission to Commodore James to venture a little southward up to Ratnagiri but he was prohibited to prolong his expedition beyond the 17th of May (in view of rough weather).[172] By that time the fort of Bankot had also surrendered to Commodore James. The English accordingly took possession of the fort and renamed it Fort Victoria. The English gains were also settled as per the clauses of their treaty with the Peshwa. Commodore James sailed for Ratnagiri on 29th of April. After surrounding it, he carried out a bombardment of the fort, but could not achieve anything concrete. He sailed back with his squadron to Bombay on the 18th of May. The task of reduction of Vijaydurg was thus left for the next season. Commenting on the fall of Suvarnadurg and the defeat of Tulaji Angre, Sen writes, "When Kulaba was attacked by a joint Anglo-Portuguese army in 1721, his (Tulaji's) father obtained strong reinforcement from Poona, led by the then Peshwa Bajirao I in person; but when the English bombarded Suvarnadurg in 1755, the Peshwa's army co-operated with the invaders and Tulaji Angre had no ally to befriend him."[173]

(B) FALL OF VIJAYDURG (1756): While the English squadron extended its offensives beyond Suvarndurg and surrounded the fort of Ratnagiri early in May 1755, Ramaji Mahadev, along with a huge force had moved to Ratnagiri and further down via land. The Maratha forces, even after the return of the English fleet, remained there and continued to exert pressure on the dominions of Tulaji Angre. They remained firmly entrenched there throughout the monsoon and were successful in limiting the hold of Tulaji Angre. Ramaji Mahadev's men, in fact, had consolidated their position in the vicinity of Vijaydurg. Tulaji Angre, who was at Vijaydurg, could well comprehend the implications of the activities of the Peshwa's troops, and was getting anxious with each passing day. He knew that it was just a matter of weeks that the English fleet would appear in his surroundings and would make his task more difficult than ever. Hence, with such apprehensions, he apparently initiated the process of negotiations with Ramaji Mahadeo before it was too late.[174] His attempts for a peace were equally well reciprocated by Ramaji Mahadeo. At the same time, utilizing the respite between the actions at Suvarnadurg and Vijaydurg, Tulaji Angre looked for 'prospective allies' elsewhere too. He approached the Portuguese at Goa, with whom a treaty was concluded on the 5th of November, 1755. As per the agreement, the Portuguese were to send a reinforcement (of army) of 500 men to Vijaydurg to help Tulaji Angre fight his enemies. However, as the Peshwa protested against the treaty and as the English also came to know about this, the Portuguese reinforcement was recalled.[175]

Bombay, in the meanwhile, was gearing up for a 'final showdown' with Tulaji Angre as the monsoon season ended. Fortunately for the English, the war with the French in the Deccan had been brought to a close as the Company's Madras government had signed a truce with the French. This, in turn, provided a fillip to the preparations of Bombay - which could now concentrate its energy solely towards the reduction of Tulaji Angre. Moreover, Bombay could also make use of the troops and fleet which had been dispatched from England to fight the French in India. The British King's (George II) Royal Squadron, under Admiral Watson, with three Companies of troops under Colonel Robert Clive had landed at Bombay on the 7th of November, 1756. As per the English records, when they came to know about the impending military expedition against Vijaydurg, both - the Admiral and the Colonel - offered their services for the same. This was gratefully accepted by Bombay.[176]

Bombay's plans and preparations for this expedition were finalized by February 1756. To manage the war-front effectively, a war council was constituted, which included Admiral Watson, Col. Clive, Admiral Pocock and Capt. Samuel Hough.[177] Watson was appointed as the supreme Commander with Clive as his deputy, to lead the assault on land. On the 7th of February, 1756, the combined military and naval expedition (with sixteen men-of-war, a number of other fighting vessels with a company of artillery) sailed from Bombay. The Bombay squadron was joined by the vessels of Peshwa at Suvarnadurg which was occupied during the military operations of the last season. The entire armada of the British and Peshwa's vessels arrived at Vijaydurg on the 11th of February.

On reaching Vijaydurg, Admiral Watson was surprised to find Ramaji Mahadeo, who had been encamping in the area around Vijaydurg for the past six months or so, coming in person to tell him that Tulaji Angre was induced to give up his struggle, and that there was no urgency of fighting as the fort of Vijaydurg would be surrendered by him. Ramaji also promised to bring Tulaji Angre to the Admiral the very next day.[178] Admiral Watson, however, was not convinced as he apprehended that in such an eventuality, the Marathas would gain more, including the fort of Vijaydurg. In fact, before the English expedition sailed for Vijaydurg, the Bombay Council had also alerted Watson and Clive about the 'crafty' nature of Tulaji Angre. They were specifically given instructions regarding the course of action in case Tulaji offered to surrender.[179] The next day Ramaji Mahadeo brought some subordinate officer of Tulaji in lieu, which alarmed Admiral Watson to such an extent that, in his own words, "I therefore thought no time should be lost, and accordingly sent summons to him (Commander of the Vijaydurg fort) the next morning to surrender the town and fort to me..."[180] At half past one, in the afternoon, the flag of truce having returned with the Fort Commander's refusal to surrender, signal was made to weigh anchor, and the whole squadron took position into the harbour. By grouping the British fleet into three divisions, Watson placed the vessels scientifically and at strategic areas. In the front, the charge was led by the sloop '*Kingfisher*' and the '*Bridgewater*'. Following them was the first line (or the inner line) comprising of the line-of-battle ships and the '*Protector*' to direct the action; the second or the middle line of comprised of the Company's ghurabs and bomb-ketches, guided and supported by the ship '*Guardian*', while the third or the outer line had the small vessels. Such a formation made it clear that the English fleet was going for offensive action.

On the other hand the vessels of Tulaji Angre were lined up across the mouth of the river. It also had the Company's ship '*Restoration*' which was captured by Tulaji Angre a few years back. From the very positioning of Tulaji Angre's armada, it seems that he had adopted a defensive posture and his main intention, probably, was to prevent the enemy's vessels from coming near the fort and carry-out a landing. The battle started with the firing of a shot from the fort on '*Kingfisher*' which was cruising closer to the fort. The English retaliated and very quickly. In a swift maneuver, the first line of the English fleet stretched up to the mouth of the river (name) in such a manner that the vessels were within musket-shot range of the fort. They took their positions quickly and embarked on a vigorous bombing of the fort and the fleet of Tulaji Angre. So vigorous was the artillery fire from the 150 English guns that the defenders of Vijaydurg and the Angre's navy were unable to match them.[181] It is reported that almost after two hours of firing, a shell fell upon the '*Restoration*' and set it on fire. Within moments, the fire spread to the other vessels and engulfed them all. Call it a chance, but the ensuing result was quite significant, as the entire armada of Tulaji Angre was destroyed by fire. In the words of an eyewitness Edward Ives, who had also participated in this action, "The fort (Vijaydurg) was so strong both by art and nature at the time we attacked it, that it might have held out a long time against all our efforts, had it been defended without any tolerable skill and resolution."[182] The naval battle for Vijaydurg was definitely over the moment Tulaji's armada was engulfed in flames. The naval defenses of the hitherto invincible Vijaydurg having been rendered useless, what remained now, was to take possession of the fort by the army. It was decided that the fort was to be stormed through a general action as the fort commander was not willing to surrender.

In the evening, after Tulaji Angre's navy was reduced to ashes, Colonel Clive landed on the shore with his troops and a baggage of artillery. On the coast, he selected a place more than a mile away from the fort; took position and waited for the daybreak so that the fort could be stormed. The Maratha troops (of Ramaji Mahadeo) had also taken position nearby. During the night, the English ships continued with their bombardment and kept the fort guards on their toes. The next morning, Admiral Watson again asked the fort to surrender, but the Commander of the fort refused to do so. Watson, therefore, commenced the formalities of the reduction of the fort. He brought the line-of-battle ships closer to the fort and ordered a vigorous bombardment on the fort once again. Clive also inched closer to the fort along with his men, all the while directing a steady artillery fire on the fort. The artillery fire caused a magazine to burst inside the fort causing great loss and damage. A white flag was immediately hoisted on the fort indicating that the fight was over for them. However, the Commander of the fort was not willing to allow the entire English troop to come inside and take possession of the fort till the next morning.

Watson was not willing to relent. He ordered the renewal of the attack and pressed the siege. This brought the defenders of the fort on their knees. They hauled down their flag and appealed for peace. In the negotiation, it was decided that a small contingent of the English troops would be allowed to gain entry to the fort, whereas the rest would do so the next day. Accordingly Captain Forbes along with 60 of his men, were allowed inside the fort to take position and fly the English flag from the fort. The next morning Colonel Clive took possession of the fort as he entered inside along with his troops. In this way one of the most celebrated naval forts of the Marathas fell to the enemies.

After the fall of Vijaydurg, the question of its control cropped up. As per the understanding between the English and the Peshwa, the fort was to be handed over to the Peshwa's men after its surrender. However, since the English had taken possession of it, they delayed the transfer of the fort to the Peshwa on one pretext or the other. One of such pretexts was the transfer of the custody of Tulaji Angre to the English. But the Marathas were not really interested in doing so. However, the things were settled between the two parties amicably, with Tulaji Angre becoming a virtual prisoner in the hands of the English, and the Marathas gaining complete control over the fort of Vijaydurg.

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[1] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 1. The robes of honour from the Maratha King Shahu were duly sent to Shekhoji Angre confirming his appointment to the post of the Maratha *Sarkhel* in the month of August 1729. It seems that the Angre brothers shared the responsibility of the naval defense of the Maratha *Swarajya* after the death of Kanhoji Angre. The Bombay Consultations, dated 15th April, 1731, record that "the two brothers, sons of Angria (Kanhoji Angre), have divided their forces, the younger being gone to Gheria (Vijaydurg) with four 'grabs' and nine 'gallivatts', and no more than the usual garrison remaining at Colabba..." [Forrest, *Home Series*, Vol. II., p. 48]

[2] SPD, Vol. III is, in fact, titled *Janjiryachya Siddi-war Shahu chi Mohim* or "Shahu's Campaign against the *Siddi* of Janjira (1733-1736)", whereas volume number XXXIII (33) is supplementary to this volume with the title *Janjiryachi Mohim* or "Shahu's Campaign against the *Siddi* of Janjira (Supplementary Papers)". Volume number XXX (30) and some other volumes also contain information on the Maratha military campaign on the *Siddi* in 1733.

[3] SPD, Vol. XXXI, no. 165; See also, SPD, Vol. III, no. 2.

[4] Fatteh Singh Bhonsle and Bajirao Pandit Pradhan (*Peshwa*) were told to proceed on a campaign in Konkan. Raghunath Hari was ordered to induce Shekhoji Angre '*Sarkhel*' to assist Bhonsle and the *Peshwa*. See, SSRPD, Vol. I, no. 57.

[5] SPD, Vol. III, no. 2.

[6] Forrest, Home Series, Vol. II., p. 51.

[7] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 10.

[8] Ibid.

[9] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 14. In this letter Shekhoji Angre wrote to the Peshwa that he expected some 800 to 900 men as the garrison strength of Underi.

[10] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 15. Shekhoji also underlines the importance of the coastal fort of Thal for the defense of Underi and suggests that Thal should be occupied before besieging Underi.

Thal fort, also called Thal Chauburj, was a small, square fort, about six miles north of Alibag. It was from this fort that the garrison of Underi obtained its supplies. The guns of Underi fort also enabled some extra protection to it.

[11] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 20.

[12] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 18

[13] In a letter written to the Peshwa on the 6th of June, Shekhoji Angre informs that on the day of '*Narli Purnima*' he would commence full-fledged naval operations against the *Siddi* at Underi. See, SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 29.

[14] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 38, 48 etc; see also, Vol. III, nos.19, 21 etc.

[15] Rajwade, V. K., (ed.), *Marathynachya Itihasachi Sadhanen*, Vol. VI, no. 86.

[16] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 30, 37 etc.

[17] Ibid., no. 58. Before the *Siddi* garrison escaped taking cover of the darkness of the night, it had set to fire the stores and arsenals.

[18] Forrest, Home Series, Vol. II, pp. 51-52.

[19] Ibid., p. 52.

[20] Ibid., pp. 54-55. A person named Antonio De Mello was also attached as the chief gunner for this expedition; see also, p. 57.

[21] For more details please refer to the letter quoted by Forrest. Ibid., pp. 54-57.

[22] Ibid., pp. 52, 56.

[23] Ibid., p. 56. This was a part of the letter of authorization and instructions sent to Captain Inchbird by Robert Cowan on the 14th of July 1733.

[24] Bombay Consultations, dated 26th July, 1733. Forrest, Ibid., pp. 53-54.

[25] SPD, Vol. III, no. 23. The Bombay Consultations, dated 26th July, 1733 also suggests that the English, along with the Portuguese, would be willing to cooperate and help the *Siddi* in recovering the territories he had lost to the Marathas recently. Forrest, Ibid., p. 54.

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[26] SSRPD, Vol. I, no. 58. It was feared that one *Siddi* Masud (of Surat) was about to collect a contingent of troops and proceed to Danda-Rajpuri to relieve the besieged *Siddi* garrison. See also, SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 44.

[27] The plan to counter the alliance of the *Siddi*, the English and the Portuguese had been discussed between Shekhoji Angre and the Peshwa in various letters originated by Shekhoji. See, SPD, Vol. III, no. 24.

[28] See, Appendix 1, at the end of the thesis.

[29] See, SPD, Vol. III, no. 34, 42 etc.

[30] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 28, 38 etc.

[31] See, SPD, Vol. III, no. 7. This fort was wrested form the *Siddi* without even engaging in a battle.

[32] A few of the Peshwa's letters, in fact blame Shekhoji Angre for the inactivity and the lack of spirit shown on his part. See, for example, SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 46, 49, etc.

[33] SPD, Vol. XXX, no. 95; see also, SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 44. In this letter to the Peshwa, Shekhoji had requested him to write to the *Suba* of Surat to take strict measures against the *Siddi* of Surat carrying help to Janjira.

[34] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 79. See also Kavyetihas Samgraha, p.22.

[35] SSRPD, Vol. I, no. 58.

[36] SPD, Vol. XXX, no. 95.

[37] SPD, Vol. III, no. 66; see also MIS, Vol. III, no.305.

[38] The Pratinidhi's decision to invite the *Siddi* for talks seems to be hastened by the fact that the Peshwa, in the meanwhile, was trying to hamper the execution of the Pratinidhi's military action. The Peshwa had apparently persuaded the commanders of Shekhoji's contingent to stop their military help to the Pratinidhi. It was also feared that the Peshwa was having secret understanding

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with the *Siddi* commander of Gowalkot. For details, please see, SPD, Vol. III, nos. 10, 15, 19, 21, 36, 39,60, 98 etc; Vol. XXXIII, nos. 62, 69; see also, MIS, Vol. III, no. 330; Vol. VI, no. 86.

[39] SPD, Vol. III, nos. 21, 25 etc.

[40] It should be noted that the Pratinidhi had already represented to the Maratha King about the treachery and intrigues of Sambhaji Angre (in unison with the Peshwa) which was hampering the proper execution of his campaign against the *Siddi.* See, for example, SPD, Vol. III, 39, 45 and 98 etc.

[41] SPD, Vol. III, nos. 83, 84, 86, 99 etc.

[42] Dhabu, *op. cit.*, p. 54 (*Sahakawali*)

[43] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 106, 117; see also SPD, Vol. III, no. 102.

[44] SPD, Vol. III, no. 55. The Pratinidhi threatened to plunder the Angre territory around Suvarnadurg.

[45] It should be remembered that the Peshwa, in course of his military offensive against the *Siddi*, had compelled him to take shelter in the sea-fort of Janjira, but for the lack of a complementary naval action, the *Siddi* could not be subdued.

[46] See, SPD, Vol. III, no.102; SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 117 etc.

[47] SPD, Vol. III, no. 102; see also Vol. XXXIII, no. 115.

[48] Sambhaji Angre's letter in Brhamendra Swami Charita, quoted by Dighe, V. G., Peshwa Bajirao, *op. cit.*, p. 71 (vide fn. 12).

[49] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 149, 150, 152 etc.

[50] Ibid. no. 256.

[51] See, for example, SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 182, 184, 189, etc.

[52] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 202, 204, 214 etc.

[53] See for example, SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 147, 159, 165, 245, 264 etc; see also, Vol. XXX, no. 113 and, Vol. III, no. 112.

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[54] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 238, 259.

[55] See, for example, SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 53, 190, 259 etc; see also, SPD, Vol. III, nos. 116-117 etc.

[56] SPD, Vol. III, nos. 123, 167; see also SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 313, 327 etc; See also, Dhabu, p. 42. Dhabu has quoted a British letter suggest that Sambhaji, in the past had also sought British help in displacing Manaji Angre from Kulaba.

[57] Dhabu, pp. 69-71. English documents are quoted by Dhabu to show that the English were definitely acting against the interests/ambitions of Sambhaji Angre.

[58] SPD, Vol. III, no. 327.

[59] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 336, 337, 350, 380; See also SPD, Vol. III, nos. 134, 169 etc.

[60] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, no. 428.

[61] It was believed that Sambhaji Angre was tacitly supporting the *Siddi* adventure on Kulaba as he had recently entered into an understanding with the *Siddi*. See, SPD, Vol. III, no. 192; also refer to footnote 58 above.

[62] See for example, SPD, Vol. III, nos. 177, 179, 182, 183, 184, 192, 196, 199 etc; see also SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 320, 322, 397, 402 etc.

[63] SPD, Vol. III, no. 183.

[64] SPD, Vol. XXXIII, nos. 431.

[65] Aitchison, C. U., Treaties Engagements and Sanads, Vol. VII, pp. 107-113.

[66] Dighe, V. G., Peshwa Bajirao I and Maratha Expansion, p. 84.

[67] See SPD, Vol. XXXI, nos. 308, 339; See also M I S, Vol. II, p. 38.

[68] Some of the places of special strength built by the Portuguese along the coast were, Bassein, Asheri, Tarapur, Mahim, Daman, Cheul etc. For more information, see Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. XIII, pt. II, pp. 456-57.

[69] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

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[70] Danvers, Vol. II, pp. 398-400. This treaty was also needed because of the strategic considerations as the Peshwa was already engaged against the *Siddi* of Janjira. The *Siddi* had always enjoyed the support and sympathy of the Europeans, hence by signing peace with the Portuguese, the Peshwa also expected to alienate the *Siddi* from the Portuguese. It is interesting to note that the treaty was mediated by the British. See also, Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 148.

[71] Danvers, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 402; It seems that the Portuguese levied a cess called *Shendi* on the Hindus which the Marathas had protested. But on 14th Aug 1732, it was decided by them that not only the Hindus, but all the non-Christians should pay the levy. See, Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 191; see also SPD, Vol. XVI, no. 11.

[72] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 150; As per the letter of Laxmibai Angre, the widow of Kanhoji Angre, addressed to the Portuguese governor, the Peshwa had started preparations to attack and take Salsette by surprise as early as 1735, MIS, VI.

[73] *Sashthichi Bakhar*, *op. cit.*, p. 37; see also, SPD, Vol. XXII, nos. 348, 349, 350 etc.

[74] SPD, Vol. XVI, no. 41.

[75] Forrest, Home Series, Vol. II, pp. 69-71; see also, SPD, Vol. XXXIV, nos. 23, 24.

[76] Pawar A. G., 'Conquest of Salsette'... p. 3.

[77] Forrest, Home Series, Vol. II, pp. 70-71; See also Pawar, 'Conquest of Salsette'., p. 3.

[78] Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[79] See also, Kincaid and Parsanis, *History of the Maratha People*, Vol. II, pp. 251-252; Desai W. S., *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

[80] SPD, Vol. XVI, nos. 50, 143 etc; cf. Kakodkar, *op. cit.*, p. 199. See also, Danvers, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 403; Forrest, Home Series, Vol. II, pp. 68-69; Desai W. S., *op. cit.*, p. pp. 96-97.

[81] SPD, Vol. XXXXIV, no. 24; Vol. XVI, no. 50.

[82] SPD, Vol. XXX, no. 346; See also, Danvers, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 403-404.

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[83] The Vasai creek was to the south of the Bassein fort, whereas the west was washed by the open sea. On the eastern side was a belt of marshy land over-flown by tidal waves; the only approach to the fort from the land side was from the north. See *Maharastra State Gazetteer*, Thane District, p. 163.

[84] SPD, Vol. XVI, nos. 37, 40; SPD, Vol. XXXIV, no. 40; see also, *Sashthichi Bakhar*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[85] Unpublished English documents quoted by Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 98.

[86] Bombay Castle Consultations in Forrest, *Home Series*, Vol. II, p. 69. This documents also records that 'the Marathas have become the masters of the whole island of Salsette except the Church at Bandra and a small fort at Versova.

[87] See, *Sashthichi Bakhar*, *op. cit.*, p. 43; SPD, Vol. XXX, p. 349; MIS, Vol. VI, pp. 114-15. Kakodkar, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

[88] *Sashthichi Bakhar*, *op. cit.*, p. 44-45. Not only was the military store and other essentials required to defend the *Estado da India's* possessions were dispatched from Portugal to Goa, but also the convoys carrying them from Goa made their way into the fort of Bassein after the monsoon had retired in the month of September-October, 1737. A negotiation with Bombay for a joint action on the Marathas was also under-way, at the same time. See also, Kakodkar, *op. cit.*, p. 207, 212.

[89] Forrest, *Home Series*, Vol. II, p. 70.

[90] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, pp. 156-57.

[91] SPD, Vol. XXXIV, no. 116. See also, Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[92] Kakodkar, *op. cit.*, p. 212; see also Kelkar, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

[93] *Sashthichi Bakhar*, *op. cit.*, p. 49-50.

[94] Kelkar, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

[95] Danvers F. C., *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 407.

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[96] Pawar, 'Conquest of Salsette...' pp. 40-41. The Portuguese approached the English at Bombay for mediation but the latter did not proceed owing to their reservation on the future of Bassein and Salsette to the Marathas.

[97] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, pp. 30-31. The contemporary British document gives a detailed picture of the arrangements of defense of Thane by the Marathas. The document includes the following:- (1) that the Marathas were 'throwing large stones from the Mortars'; (2) that the death of John Xavier Pinto, the Portuguese General, was due to a 'musket shot in the throat'; (3) that the Portuguese had 'requested for 400 barrels of powder, 5000 shots of different size' so as to stand their ground.

[98] MIS, Vol. VI, no. 120; see also Kelkar, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

[99] SPD, Vol. XXII, no. 121.

[100] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 163. The Portuguese documents further suggest that 'Bajirao was compelled to attack Goa in order to stop supplies of men and materials to Bassein by sea; see also (fn. 110), p. 172.

[101] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 178.

[102] SPD, Vol. XVI, nos. 147, 150, 160, etc.

[103] Kakodkar, P. R, *op. cit.*, p. 343. Karanja was occupied on the 10th of March. See also, Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 162. The Portuguese document mentions that Manaji took 2000 men in his armada which consisted of 40 Galvats; The British were quite upset at the fall of Karanja to Manaji Angre. Hence, in their consultation dated 24th March, 1739, they debated on the prospects dislodging Manaji Anger from Karanja, and occupying it instead for the use of the Company. See Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, pp. 32-33.

[104] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 27; see also SPD, Vol. XXXIV, no. 141, for details on the action for Mahim. It is reported that 30 canons were put into use by the Marathas to reduce Mahim.

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[105] SPD, Vol. XVI, no. 127.

[106] SPD, Vol. XVI, no. 128.

[107] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 28; see also SPD, Vol. XXXIV, no. 159.

[108] SPD, Vol. XVI, nos. 138-140.

[109] SPD, Vol. XVI, nos. 141 and 142.

[110] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 34; Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.,* p. 162.

[111] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, pp. 36-37. Bombay also announced that brick-layers and carpenters from Bombay may go voluntarily upon their service at Bassein, for which they shall have free liberty to repair tether.

[112] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p.31 and 36.

[113] Desai W.S., *op. cit.*, p. 103.

[114] Sinha H. N., Rise of the Peshwa, p. 197.

[115] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 78; See also, SPD, Vol. XXIII, no. 121 for Chimaji Appa's opinion.

[116] SPD, Vol. XXII, p. no. 72.

[117] Danvers, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 411.

[118] Kakodkar, P. R., *op. cit.*, p. 343.

[119] Ibid., p. 357.

[120] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[121] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 163.

[122] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[123] Subramanian Lakshmi, 'Bombay and the West Coast in the 1740's', p. 193, *IESHR* (Vol. VIII, no. 2)

[124] For a general discussion on the working of the Maratha Confederacy, refer, Kadam V.S, *The Maratha Confederacy*, [Chapter, III, pp. 31-58].

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[125] Plasokar R D, *Bajirao I – An Outstanding Cavalry General*, p. 162.

[126] Dhabu, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-95. See also, Sardesai, *NHM*, Vol. II, p. 177.

[127] *Maharastra State Gazetteer*, [Ratnagiri dist.], p. 166.

[128] See, MIS, Vol. II, p. 17, 27.

[129] Dhabu, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

[130] For details of this expedition, see, Sen, S. N., 'The Dutch expedition against Gheria, 1739', *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission*, 1940, pp. 228-35; Cf, *History and Culture... op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 302 (fn. 29).

[131] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 202.

[132] Dhabu, *op. cit.*, p. 61. In 1740, Sambhaji Angre attacked a Portuguese fleet convoying rice to Goa. He captured rice boats and destroyed the fleet. See also Sen S. N., *The Military System of the Marathas*, pp. 193-95.

[133] SPD, XXXIII, no. 457. Though this letter was intercepted by Manaji Angre, who accordingly arranged for suitable defenses of his territories.

[134] The Peshwa wanted to have more control over the Konkan including the coast and ports. He was apparently not happy the way Manaji had occupied the island of Karanja during the campaign of Bassein.

[135] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[136] Quoted by Desai, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

[137] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 65.

[138] Kakodkar, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

[139] Ibid., p. 345. Sometimes later also, Manaji was defeated by a Portuguese fleet in a naval battle which lasted for 6days and 5 nights. See, Sen S. N., *Military System*...p. 202.

[140] The above description of the attempt on Kulaba by Sambhaji Angre was largely based on the following documents and books: Rajwade, V. K., MIS, Vol. 8, no. 157, and Vol. 2, p. 17, 27 etc;

Angre Shakawali, p. 90; English documents (Bombay Public Proceedings) quoted by Desai, W S, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-116. Cf. Dhabu, *op. cit.*

[141] Bombay Public Proceedings papers, quoted by Desai, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[142] Ibid., p. 117.

[143] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 198.

[144] Rajwade, MIS, Vol. III, nos. 308, 345. Cf. *History and Culture*...Vol. VIII, p. 303. It is mentioned that Tulaji Angre captured Anjanwel on the 25th of January, 1745. See also Sen S. N., *Military System*...p. 201.

[145] Rajwade, MIS, Vol. VI, no. 153; Vol. 2, p. 101.

[146] Quoted by Dhabu, D. G., *op. cit.*, pp.105. For more references on Tulaji-English conflict, see also pp. 103-04.

[147] *History and Culture*... *op. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 304.

[148] Cited by Sen S. N., *Military System*...p. 202

[149] Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 196. See also, p. 221 (fn. 47).

[150] See, for example, Bendre, *Downfall of the Maratha Navy*, p. 37. Bendre writes that Tulaji Angre generally kept up an army of 30,000 sepoys and Topasses. His gunners and sea officers were mostly renegade Europeans...

[151] Portuguese Viceroy's (of Goa) letter dated, 13th February, 1747; Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 228 (fn. 64, 65).

[152] SPD, Vol. III, no. 127. Ramraja ascended the throne on 4th January, 1750.

[153] Sardesai, G S., Marathi Riyasat, Vol. IV (Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao Nanasaheb), pp. 244-45. The Sindhia and Holkar Chieftains were also gratified accordingly.

[154] MIS, Vol. VI, p. 54.

[155] Sardesai, G S., *op. cit.*, pp. 245-46.

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[156] An agreement (of Sangola) was signed between Tarabai and the Peshwa in October 1751; for a discussion on the Ramraja episode, see, Ibid., pp. 246-67. Cf. Kadam, V. S., Maratha Confederacy, pp. 38-41.

[157] SSRPD, Vol. I, no. 240. It seems the Peshwa was looking for some pretexts to initiate a military action on Tulaji Angre.

[158] Quoted by Pissurlencar P., *op. cit.*, p. 237.

[159] Ibid., p. 240. Muzaffar Khan asked for 1500 guns and 25 Khandis of ammunitions.

[160] Cited in *History and Culture*...Vol. VIII, p. 304.

[161] Apart from the fact that this military enterprise would give the British an upper hand against their arch rivals (the house of Angres) who have so heroically disputed the British supremacy of the sea, another pressing reason why Bombay agreed to help the Peshwa was their fear of the French. It may be recalled that in Europe a war had started between England and France. The repercussion of this war could be felt in India too, where the respective companies of the two nations got involved in an intense struggle, also referred to as the Anglo-French wars or Carnatic Wars. Bombay wanted to secure its establishments against a probable French invasion on the western coast of India with the help of the Peshwa.

[162] See, Low, C. R., *op. cit.*, Vol. I., p. 304.

[163] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 87. Three letters written by the Peshwa to the British Governor of Bombay were discussed at the Bombay Council meeting on the 10th of March, 1755.

[164] Ibid., p. 89.

[165] Ibid., p. 91.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid. Commodore James reports, "The few Maratha vessels which proceeded with us (*for the chase*) behaved indeed extremely ill... when we left off the chase there was not one of the fleet,

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but was hull down the stern..." It seems that the fleeing Angre vessels 'used even their turbans to catch wind' for the sail to make good their escape.

[168] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, pp. 98-101; [See also appendix no. 03].

[169] Ibid., p. 92. As per the report of Commodore James, on the 2nd of April, sounding was done 'all round the fort'. On the 3rd morning at 9'O clock, 'upon flowing of the tide, we weighed and ran the bomb vessels and launched into 3 fathoms of water... and began bombardment'.

[170] Ibid., pp. 91-92. Commodore James writes that the Maratha vessels might not have fired more than 50 shots throughout the day.

[171] Ibid., p. 94. (Translation of Ramaji Pant's letter to the English dated, 7th April, 1755)

[172] Ibid., p. 96.

[173] Sen S. N., *Military System*...p. 205.

[174] Ibid.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 104; Cf. Desai, W. S., *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[177] Ibid., pp. 104-05.

[178] It seems Ramaji Mahadeo had, by that time, bribed most of the men of Tulaji Angre and wanted to take the fort through deceit (rather than a general military action) from Tulaji Angre. Refer, Sen S. N., *Military System*..., p. 205.

[179] Forrest, Maratha Series, Vol. I, p. 106-07.

[180] Biddulph John, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

[181] Ibid., pp.. The details of this expedition have largely been based on Biddulph John's book. Admiral Watson's letter dated 14th of Feb, 1756, addressed to the Governor of Bombay also provides valuable information regarding the English attack on the fort. See, Forrest, *Maratha Series*, Vol. I, p. 108-09.

[182] Quoted by Sen S. N., *Military System*...p. 205.

6. CONCLUSION

"Human thought and action have their springs not in spatial vacuum,

But in some geographical milieu which defines in various degree -

The character and orbit of human effort."

- W. G. East: Geography Behind History

There is no doubt about the fact that Shivaji, in his effort to create a political niche for himself, struck a fine balance between the unique geographical situations of the Deccan country on the one hand, and the aspirations of the Maratha people on the other. His creativity and genius is well attested by his political and military exploits which have earned him a special place in the history of warfare in India. An analysis of the military activities of Shivaji reveals the working of the mastermind seeking balance between military force and stratagem, direct fighting and indirect methods of warfare. This is precisely the reason why many scholars emphasise that the place of Shivaji in Indian military traditions should be determined by the extent of his contributions to the art of warfare.

Geographically speaking, the stretch of territory - Shivaji began with as an independent entity was too hilly and narrow. Given the resources at his disposal, initially, if it was difficult to expand eastward because of the presence of the mighty Mughals, in the west, the Arabian Sea hindered any logical expansion of the Maratha territorial base. Credit must be given to the genius of Shivaji in recognizing the value of a navy for a country (the Maratha *Swarajya*) with an extensive coastline (as a result of his brilliant military successes). It was the foresightedness of this great leader, therefore, that the foundations of Maratha Navy were laid during his regime. So that the Maratha navy could achieve its declared objectives and, at the same time, function profitably, a national (military) strategy encompassing the geographical realities of the *Swarajya* (both land and sea) was implemented by Shivaji.

In terms of terrestrial location, the Maratha *Swarajya* could be categorised as '**Maritime location**', i.e., a territory having access to sea and also connected with land. Shivaji, therefore, deployed naval forces not merely for defensive purposes, but also for maritime commerce so that the cost of defense, to some extent, could be successfully met. Though the contemporary literature/documents (which were compiled for specific purposes, and were essentially non-military and non warfare-oriented in nature) may not directly help in making-out the real intent of the thought-process of genius of Shivaji, we can, at least have some practical deductions and reconstruct his appreciation of the situation of that time. For example, as noted in Chapter II, the objectives of the Maratha navy during the reign of Shivaji could be studied under three different headings, viz., (a) Military Objectives - To destroy enemy and its war machine through navy: for example the long drawn struggle (or war of attrition) with the *Siddi* of Janjira; (b) Political Objectives - To enforce political or associated demands on the adversary: with respect to the Europeans as only they could have significantly contributed towards the improvement of the Maratha navy; and (c) Geographical Objectives - To overthrow the enemy from strategically important areas: could be understood in the light of the fight for Janjira and the occupation of Kamsa and Khanderi-Underi.

Shivaji was also aware of the fact that the hold on the sea would have helped to keep open an alternative line of communication/conveyance for him in case his main base was (political capital/stronghold on land) was cut across by any of the enemies. Hence, as on land, a chain of marine fortresses, both – on the coast and on the off-shore islands, were constructed. During the time of naval fights, the marine forts acted as the most immediate source of supply of war materials and also the place of safe refuge for the fleet in case of adversity. Such places, if properly fortified, and with ample store of water, ammunition and garrison, could very well serve the function of naval bases, and would successfully stand against the attack of any enemy. At the same time, the artillery and guns of the naval forts (on the coast) would keep the creek or bay safe for navigation. They would thus, discourage the enemy ships from entering the sea/channel or the river lane on which they stood.

Boat-building activities were also taken at hand. At a brisk pace, vessels of different specifications and sizes were produced at different dockyards such as Kalyan-Bhiwandi, Jaitapur etc. In a short span of time, the number of vessels under the Maratha naval establishment exceeded more than a couple of hundreds. The logic behind the production of vessels in large numbers could be understood in terms of the overall strategy and tactical considerations, the Marathas followed during their naval wars. As per a pre-conceived strategy to overcome the limitation in terms of fire power, the principle of concentration of force (vessels) in naval warfare was applied (quite opposite to what the Marathas practiced during a war on land). At the point of contact, the enemy vessels (irrespective of their size or fire-power, though usually big) were so overwhelmed by sheer number (of vessels as well as crew/fighters), that it was difficult for the enemy to concentrate and target on the Marathas. The Maratha fighters would then board the enemy vessels and induce physical duel with the enemy crew on board. The Marathas would ultimately emerge winners mainly because of their overwhelming numbers. This was the most daring method, aimed to install fear in the hearts of the enemies so that they should give in to the demands of the Marathas. Another method applied by the Marathas in their naval engagements was the principle of surprise in which geographical (hydrographical) features would also constitute a part of the tactics. The Marathas vessels - having full knowledge of the submerged rocks, sand bars and tidal or wind patterns, would lure the European ships to the vicinity of the coast where water would be on the shallower side. Once the trick worked, with the use of specially built vessels (Ghurabs - towed speedily towards the enemy ship by rowing boats or Galvats), the Marathas would de-capacitate the enemy vessels would have become sluggish by that time for want of wind for the sail. Every thing would be done so swiftly that it would leave little scope for the bigger enemy-ships for maneuvering. If, by any chance, the enemy ship still stood a chance to making even with the attacking vessels, the Marathas (mostly with flat bottomed vessels) would make good their escape to the numerous creeks and coves with shallow water. In such a situation, any chase by the enemy would have been rendered dangerously futile. In other words, the Marathas derived the advantage of choosing the spot for naval engagements as well as disengagements. It should be remembered here, that the art of disengagement was equally significant as the art of engagement as the Maratha suffered severe constraints in terms of resources.

True, the resources of the Marathas, particularly in the early years of the *Swarajya*, were too scarce to have allowed them to go for a full-fledged naval establishment, but the foresightedness of the great visionary Shivaji saw the humble beginning and corroborating success of the Maratha Navy. And, with a proper system of naval administration (navy being an independent limb of the state as per *Sabhasad Bakhar*) in place, Shivaji tried to overcome the resource crunch too. Apart from resource crunch, the limitations faced by Shivaji were too many to have allowed the Maratha navy to grow and flourish in a proper manner. The first and foremost of the limitations was the unavailability of time with him (to be devoted for nurturing the navy in its infancy). He faced the 'time constraint' largely on account of his bigger political compulsions. Most of the time he was hard pressed from the eastern side by the Mughals or the Bijapuris or even some recalcitrant elements. The recurrence of the likes of 'Shaista Khans', 'Afzal Khans', 'Jai Singhs', and 'Khem Sawants' etc., on the political spectrum of Deccan kept him pre-occupied throughout his political career. The end result was that the naval planning and actions depended on the urgency /outcome of these events. That Shivaji had a keen desire to personally supervise the naval establishment of the *Swarajya* and take it to newer horizons, has been demonstrated quite early in his political career. The laying of the foundation stone of his naval headquarters at Sindhudurg in 1664, and his participation (in person) in the Basrur Naval Expedition of 1665, speaks more than volumes about the real intents of this military visionary.

Another noticeable limitation Shivaji faced was in terms of technological backwardness. Though this is a strictly comparative terminology, and depends upon a number of factors. But, keeping in mind the facts: (a) that he had raised a naval establishment from scratch; and (b) the complex nature of challenges from the rivals, he was facing (viz. the European companies, backed by a full-fledged naval establishments back home or even the *Siddi* of Janjira who were always aided by the Europeans and financed by the Mughals); his naval establishment appeared to be too primitive for any of his rivals. He lacked the technology to construct sea-worthy ships which could frequent the vast expanses of the sea and also put up an effective resistance to the enemy challenges. At best, what Shivaji could manage was a coastal navy or what can be described as the rudiments of a 'Brown Water Navy'. For that also he had to depend, many a times, on the foreign technical expertise. We have references of few Portuguese ship-wrights engaged by Shivaji for the purpose of boat-building.

Artillery was another serious limiting factor with the Maratha warfare - both on land as well as on water. The big guns and canons could be fitted on the marine forts, but they were too clumsy to handle. Their accuracy, range and effectiveness were a matter of speculations. Unlike the forts situated at a height i.e., on the top of the hills/promontories which could even roll down stones/boulders to deter the enemy, the guns/cannons of the coastal forts needed ammunitions and shots, which were not readily available. Shivaji, therefore, had to depend upon the Europeans for the supply of guns, cannons and other ammunitions. To ensure a regular supply of ammunitions, Shivaji used the technique of 'persuasion and compulsion' in a right manner. As we have noted in the thesis, Shivaji, as a tool of compulsion, either used his navy or army to threaten the coastal possessions of the European companies, or used to stop the supply of food and other essential to their pockets so as to put pressure on them. At the same time, as a means of persuasion, he, in most of the times, utilized the diplomatic channels to get his demands fulfilled. From the Maratha perspective, no doubt, it was an effective way to overcome the limitations of artillery and ammunitions. Documentary references are aplenty which indicate towards the fact that the Europeans did respond to the Maratha demands of guns and ammunitions. However, it needs to be understood that the guns and ammunitions which were being passed on to the Marathas (by the Europeans) were usually not very effective ones. We have a few explicit references that, in some cases, such guns and cannons which had been discarded by them because of wear and tear or otherwise, were passed on to the Marathas. In such cases, the Marathas could exercise but a little choice.

Shivaji, therefore, always devised superior strategy and tactics in his naval encounters to do away with the need of a pivot weapon. In the first instance, he would *avoid a direct confrontation* with a superior force; secondly, he would *offer a fight only at places/areas selected by him* so that he may make the best use of the geographical elements; thirdly - and more importantly, he would *always keep the option of 'disengagement' open*, rather than taking casualty in terms of boats or men (i.e., preserve the meager resources under his possession); fourthly, his *naval actions* (wherever possible) *were to be supported by corresponding military actions on land* to make it more effective. For example he would *enforce a naval blockade* of the coastal/island settlements of the enemy (Europeans as well as the *Siddi*) and try to starve them by preventing the supply of the essentials to those parts. Most of the coastal possessions of the Europeans were surrounded by the Maratha territory; hence, it was easier for him to initiate simultaneous military action originating from land and put double pressure on them. With regards to *Siddi*'s Janjira, a complete naval blockade by surrounding the island fort from all sides was the only possible way to compel the *Siddi* to come to terms. However, that could not materialize because of the open/clandestine support of the Europeans and other powers from time to time; and fifthly, he would *use other means to get his demands fulfilled*.

Another, major constraint which Shivaji faced was in terms of the profitability and viability of the naval operations. He had crated a separate military establishment which, like any other department of the state, required regular finances so as to enable it to perform its functions. Unlike the land based military forces, which, by fighting wars, could capture territory and directly contribute to the resources of the state, the wars fought by the navies, theoretically speaking, could not provide any such visible advantages (except for the defense of the coastal territory). For the Marathas, who had just laid the foundations of naval force, the pressing question then was - what could be the objective of the naval wars, if they were not 'just for the purpose of coastal defense of the *Swarajya*'? Shivaji had the solution to this particular situation. He realized the significance of the Konkan in coastal as well as the overseas trade. At the same time, he was also mindful of the extent of coastline his *Swarajya* possessed. The contemporary European documents bring forth the information that Shivaji 'possessed eight or nine important/famous ports on the Konkan coast'. Hence, like other (European) nations, which supported commercial and other economic activities by providing naval assistance, Shivaji also started giving naval protection to the coastal trade of the *Swarajya*. We have reference of his 'salt fleets' plying from one point to the other in his coastal domain. The customs and port duties were streamlined and (probably) regularized so that the state establishment should have a regular flow of income to support the naval establishment. Merchants from various places - including foreign merchants, were invited to settle down on his coast, and were and provided incentives for the same. For, they would bring along commerce which would directly contribute to the meager resources of the *Swarajya*. Passes of various types, in return for money, were issued to the merchants indicating the facilities or exemptions (as the case may be) granted to them. References, indicative of the involvement of the Maratha state in foreign /overseas trade with the ports of Red Sea are found in good numbers in the contemporary English documents. In other words, Shivaji fixed the attention of his naval establishment towards more pressing and profitable operations and benefited enormously. An important aspect of the Maratha naval administration was that it was encouraged to be self-financing and self-sufficient. The entire naval set-up was conceived in such a manner that the dependency (for finances) on land, i.e., the income generated through the land revenue, was to be done away with. Even *Amatya* warned against any such policy as it would not only be counter-productive, but, in the long run, would also be detrimental to the interests of the state.

One of the pressing commitments of Shivaji, which also acted as a major hindrance to the development of the Maratha navy, was to deal with the enemy like the *Siddi* of Janjira on land as well as on water. The *Siddi*, with a tradition of seafaring and admiralty for the last couple of generations, was quite resourceful in naval matters. He had an effective flotilla, an impregnable sea-castle (which he used as his naval headquarters) and, above all, the political patronage of the Bijapur Sultans and (later on) the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Shivaji understood the importance of Janjira for the survival of the *Siddi*. He also knew that till the time Janjira was captured, the *Siddi* challenge could not be terminated. Hence, he, tried various methods & means to reduce Janjira, but failed. It is interesting to note that the genius of Shivaji quickly learnt vital lessons from his struggle with the *Siddi*. *If it was not physically possible to capture Siddi's Janjira, it was not altogether impossible to have such Janjiras for himself.* As a result, Shivaji fortified Kamsa, Kulaba, Suvarnadurg, and Khanderi for the purpose of his naval establishment. The possession of such bases provided strategic naval advantages to the Marathas for years to come.

Shivaji, in a short span of time, had achieved so much for the *Swarajya* that it was never going to be easy for his immediate successors to imitate his genius. Sambhaji, during his short reign spanning for about a decade, was hard pressed because of the Mughal military offensive pursued by Aurangzeb. Hence, he was left with little time and energy to devote to his naval establishment. However, like his father, Sambhaji too had an understanding of the naval requirements of the *Swarajya*. In the first instance, he could make out what advantages the occupation of Janjira and such bases like it, would provide to his struggle with the Mughals. He therefore, made a daring attempt to take the island fort of Janjira. Not only was a *naval blockade* of the Janjira fort undertaken, but simultaneously, an attempt was made *to fill-up the channel separating the Danda-Rajapuri coast from the island fort*. The outcome, to a great extent, depended on the quality time spent by the Maratha King to direct the entire operation. However, for fear of a Mughal military action elsewhere in the *Swarajya*, he had to abort the ambitious project of filling-up the channel, and had to shift his troops to other areas. The Janjira campaign thus failed once again: not for want of naval resources but because of bigger political compulsions of Sambhaji. It was, after all, his war of survival with the Mughals.

The second instance when Sambhaji exhibited his logical understanding of the naval requirements was by undertaking an attack on Goa, late in 1683. By that time, he had failed in his attempts to take Underi as well as Janjira from the *Siddi*. He had also unsuccessfully attempted to fortify the island of Elephanta near Bombay. The Portuguese had rejected his demand for a 'landing place at Chaul' which could be fortified later on. However his troops had successfully landed at the island of Karanja with an intention to grab it from the Portuguese and fortify it for the naval use of the *Swarajya*. Sambhaji wanted to occupy Goa for the same purpose but his attempts to do so were thwarted by the Portuguese as well as the tidal waves. He also apprehended that the Mughal emperor might use Goa as a naval base to compliment his military action against the Marathas. In that eventuality, it would have been impossible for him to continue his struggle against the mighty Mughals. Hence, there is a bigger possibility that *Sambhaji's action on Goa was more because of the geo-strategic (naval) considerations that such places/bases should be occupied before the enemy occupied it*. Otherwise, Sambhaji used all the other means – diplomatic and otherwise, with respect to the European powers so that the basic requirements of his navy (viz. artillery) should be met without any hiccups. The brief stint of Richard Keigwin as the governor of Bombay had brought much hope to both the sides as they were able to make a common cause as regards their common (naval) enemies. However, the most interesting aspect of his reign is that he had even contracted the English (by way of a naval alliance) to deal with the *Siddi* menace on the Konkan coast, particularly at a time when he was engaged with the Mughals on the land front. This arrangement, though, did not work for a long time owing to the resource crunch faced by him. But, on the whole, Sambhaji during his decade long rule as the Maratha King, tried to keep the Maratha flag high on the Konkan waters. What other proof of his sincerity towards the Maratha naval establishment is required than the fact that after his death, a trusted Maratha official Ramchandrapant Amatya sent the family of Rajaram (Sambhaji's son and successor to the Maratha throne), by sea from Rajapur to Honaver, and then by land across Carnatic to Jinjee fort. In this way, the naval establishment came to the rescue of the Royal family at the time of grave crisis.

After the death of Sambhaji and the subsequent relegation of Rajaram from the political scenario of the Deccan, the onus of keeping the Maratha flag flying high on the Konkan waters fell on Kanhoji Angre. During this period, the *Siddi* of Janjira emerged as the biggest challenge to the Marathas naval establishment. The *Siddi* had considerably expanded his political and military base in the Konkan, both - on land as well as on water. Kanhoji Angre's joining hands with the Peshwa and subsequently coming to the mainstream of Maratha politics, proved to be a boon for the Maratha naval establishment. It should be understood, however, that the limitations faced by Kanhoji Angre were similar to what the founder of the Maratha *Swarajya* Shivaji once faced. The difficulty level had rather increased in view of the changed nature of the European (especially the English) Trading Companies in India. The English Company had resolved to use force and military action to further their interests in India. Almost 50 years had elapsed since the first keels of the Maratha navy were set afloat. Moreover, for the last couple of decades, it lacked a direction and, more so, a specified objective. Hence, to revitalize the Maratha navy, what Kanhoji Angre needed to do immediately were: (a) to strengthen and modernize the outlook of the Maratha Navy; (b) to secure strategic Coastal Forts; (c) to undertake ship-building activities on a large scale; (d) to work on the enhancement of fire power of his vessels. As per the arrangement with the Peshwa, who happened to be one of his old acquaintances, Kanhoji Angre was give a free hand in the matters of naval affairs of the *Swarajya*.

It is interesting to note that Kanhoji Angre, unfazed by the limitations and the nature of challenges his naval establishment faced, was determined *to project Maratha authority and sovereignty over the Konkan Waters* done by Shivaji in the past. It seems that more than the projection of power, his navy was contesting the authority of the Europeans that Kanhoji was involved in. He seems to have worked on the principle of the natural right of the coastal/local people to exploit the marine/maritime resources. Even in the modern situation, the sovereignty of the coastal countries extend up to 12 nautical miles; hence, to expect Kanhoji to claim 'right' over the waters does not sound inconceivable. With this idea in the backdrop, Kanhoji declared it mandatory for everyone plying in the Konkan waters, to obtain his maritime permits/passes (*dastaks/kauls*). There were certain exceptions to this rule, viz. the European Companies were exempted from buying such passes for the purpose of their official trade (as they were already paying port/custom duties). Kanhoji enforced this rule strictly and started searching the vessels of various nationalities as the Portuguese used to do. His intent was to check the private trade of the Company officials and other illegal activities they involved in (viz. of subletting their cargo space to the Indian merchants), which meant a dent in the share of revenue to the Maratha state.

So that the writ of the Maratha navy should loom large across the Konkan waters, it was necessary to have a good number of sea-worthy vessels. Kanhoji Angre had the dockyards and shipwrights, but timber in a big quantity was not easily available to him. He, therefore, devised a very noble method, that of planting of teak across Bankot region. However, to grow, the teaks required a considerable time (more than a decade), and Kanhoji did not have that much of time to wait for. He, therefore, tried to obtain timber in a forcible manner (as no one would sell them to him). Another limitation he faced was that of practicable artillery. That also was not readily available. In the Konkan, it could have been obtained only from the Europeans. Kanhoji knew that the Europeans wouldn't usually part with the requisite numbers of guns and ammunitions required by him, as they were fully aware as to what purpose were they going to be used for. To overcome this limitation, Kanhoji, once again, adopted a daring method – that of seizing European ships on some pretexts and removing guns and cannons from them (so that they could be fitted to the Maratha vessels). As a result his daring actions earned him more enemies than friends. The English at Bombay, in particular became his most avowed enemy.

We have taken note of the tactical dispositions of Kanhoji Angre's fleet while it successfully negotiated with the successive and determined attempts of the English and joint Anglo-Portuguese forces to reduce the Maratha navy and its maritime strongholds. It would not be grossly incorrect to say that such 'determined attempts' on the Europeans turned futile more by their own follies rather than the virtues of the opponent. To recollect and mention a few of them here would not be out of context. In the first instance, when Vijaydurg was attacked in 1717, the English fire-ships failed to batter the walls of the fort. At the same time a boom across the inner harbour prevented the fire-ships to venture inside and inflict any damage to the ships lying across the cove. The English attempt to scale the walls of the fort also met with failure as their scaling ladders fell short of the height. In the end, when the English had managed to land a few of their contingents ashore so that they could manually set on fire the ships lying in the harbour, they could not reach there as an overflowing marshy land was to be crossed to reach them. *The expedition failed as the English could not get past the simple defensive measures adopted by Kanhoji Angre*.

In the second instance, when a formidable English fleet set out to storm Khanderi late in the year 1718, no one would have expected that this attempt, directed by governor (of Bombay) Boone in person, was going to meet a fate similar to that of the previous expedition. This time too, the besiegers managed to land their troops though not in a considerable number – owing to the tidal current at the time of landing. But, in the absence of a concerted action to storm the fort, the attack of the English troops failed. They had to retreat in view of the determined counter-offensive form the Maratha garrison of the fort. Boone's attempt failed also because of the fact that the besieging English fleet ***failed to enforce a complete naval blockade*** of the fort of Khanderi. As a result, the garrison of the besieged fort could refurbish the essential supply of ammunitions and shots and initiate a determined counter-offensive. The situation was somewhat similar to that of English attempt on Khanderi when Shivaji had fortified it in

1679. At that time also, the Marathas (small) boats were able to procure and ferry the essential supplies for the besieged garrison. The English, on the other hand could not bring their bigger bombing vessels closer to the fort as they *were not sure about the depth of water or even the presence of submerged rocks*. In short, in this engagement too, Kanhoji Angre's men kept the things simple, and stuck to the basics of warfare. Taking advantage of the natural (hydrographic) features, they relied on defensive as a better form of war under the given circumstances. The English, on the other hand, simply failed to stick to a concerted plan of action and lost the edge.

In the third instance, when Vijaydurg was threatened once again by the English in the months immediately following the monsoon in the year 1720, Kanhoji's men showed exemplary grit and courage and foiled the attempt of the attackers. A great deal of preparations and planning had been done by Boone and his council before the commencement of the British naval action on Vijaydurg. Specially designed ships (which were like 'floating castles') were constructed on the orders of Boone. It is a different story altogether, though, that these 'specially built ships' in the initial phase of the English campaign caused much embarrassment to them rather than winning accolades. This was mainly on account of their 'faulty designs', which had to be rectified in the thick of the action. The Marathas, on the other hand, taking lessons from the previous English offensives, appeared to be well stocked and well prepared to frustrate the attempts of any enemy on the fort. Though the English troops, taking advantage of the overwhelming fire showered on the fort, manage to land on the shore, they were pushed back by the defenders of the fort in a daring action. At the same time an explosion occurred accidentally on one of the English ships killing some and wounding many, which had disheartened the attacking troops. Interestingly enough, the Sawant of Wadi, another enemy of Kanhoji Angre, joined hands with the British and opened up another battle front at the coastal fort of Jaigad. But in the absence of a unified plan, could do little to make any impression to the fort. Boone ultimately had to call off this expedition too. In this engagement, though the Maratha troops fought valiantly, and the guns of the fort of Vijaydurg also kept at bay the English ships etc., the failure of the English effort was more due the poor management of their war efforts and the absence of a resolute plan of action. *They failed*, once again, *to enforce a naval blockade* which was so vital for the success of any operation of such nature, that too – against an enemy like Kanhoji Angre. Interestingly, Boone, in his report sent to England, pointed out that '*Angre's (smaller) ships were faster and more maneuverable*'.

In the fourth instance, Kanhoji Angre's stronghold of Kulaba was on the target of the British in 1721 – this time assisted by the Portuguese. The European strategy, as conceived by Boone, was to carry out a two-pronged attack on Kulaba – one originating from the land side and the other form the sea. However, Kanhoji Angre (who was present at Kulaba at that time), cognisant of the allied plans, had assembled a considerable army inside the fortress. On this occasion, the English were successful in enforcing a naval blockade on Kulaba. On the land side, the Portuguese and British troops had encircled the fort so that it could be stormed. The European plan was to cut-off Kulaba from the rest of the Maratha territory from the sea as well as land. The English plan to batter the fort from the sea-side, however, failed due to the effective fort-guns which successfully kept the English fire-ships at a distance. In this process, one Captain Maine, '*anxious to bring his guns to bear on the fort, ran his ship – the Shoreham, on the rocks*'. After that none of the ships ventured close to the fort. On the other hand, Kanhoji Angre did not use his naval fleet (stationed at Kulaba) in this battle, as he did not want to risk their safety. At the same time Kanhoji also seemed to be confident about the strength of the fortress. In lieu of the navy, the Maratha cavalry took to the field and charged the joint Anglo-Portuguese forces so ferociously that the besiegers lost heart. The Portuguese retreated and signed peace with the Peshwa in January 1722. In this way, lack of a unified command and mutual distrust amongst the allied forces resulted in the collapse of the European mission. The Prompt arrival of the Peshwa with a large military contingent was also one of the determining factors of the outcome of this expedition. The lesson learnt was, cooperation and coordination were key to success to any military action. It is equally important to learn that all these actions involving Kanhoji Angre were fought along the coast, for which medium size or even small vessels were more suitable. It can also be inferred, at the same time, that Kanhoji Angre was aware of his limitations and he exploited them to his advantage by never venturing into the deep seas to give a fight to the Europeans. ***In other words, it would not be incorrect to assume that Kanhoji Angre owes his success***

against the Europeans largely because of his ability to transform their advantages into disadvantages.

The story after the death of *Sarkhel* Kanhoji Angre is that of the ascendancy of the Peshwas in all the matters relating to the Maratha administration. The Maratha state, under their leadership, had gradually transformed into a land based power. Though, the Support and coordination to the successors of Kanhoji continued, the Peshwas, unfortunately, never could grasp the essence of naval strategy. The Maratha naval establishment, as a result, remained neglected during the Peshwa period. In fact a grand Maratha strategy, taking into account the realities on land as well as sea, could not be conceived because of the pre-occupation of the Peshwas. Moreover, the seeds of dissensions had also taken deep routes in the 1740s in the house of the Angres – the hereditary *Sarkhels* of the Maratha state. The Peshwa, rather than finding out an amicable solution to this problem, got involved himself in the power struggle. This proved fatal not only to the interests of the Maratha navy, but to the Maratha state alike, in the long run. The situation come to such a pass that Tulaji, the last of the recognized Maratha Admirals of some repute, was left to fend for himself as well as the Maratha naval establishment.

By the time Tulaji Angre came to the fore-front, it was disastrously late for any chances of a positive revival of the Maratha naval establishment. The Peshwas had already succeeded in making the navy subservient to the needs of the army (land forces) as opposed to what *Amatya* had instructed [Navy – an independent limb of the military organization]. The Maratha navy, as such lacked any definite program. The boat-building organization had not kept pace with the European competitors as regards size, constructional techniques, navigational aids etc. Though the Peshwas had taken initiatives to establish foundries, so as to be at par with the Europeans and other rivals – as far as the armament industry was concerned, the benefits were not passed on to the naval establishment. It was left to Tulaji, hence, to establish his own foundries and bring the fire power of his vessels at par. As per the Portuguese records, Tulaji, it seems, had successfully *began casting cannon guns* on the model of Portuguese cannons. This was no mean an achievement of Tulaji Angre under the given circumstances. However, an appraisal of the naval wars and tactics during the time of the successors of Kanhoji would take us to the point where it would be very difficult to deny that the Maratha naval activities, in the absence of a definite vision, were restricted to indecisive (hit and run) actions on the sea. True, the meager financial resources (particularly after the division of the office of the *Sarkhel*) would not have permitted Tulaji in raising a modern and compatible fleet of that time. However, he could have easily overcome such limitations had he applied other means (viz. diplomatic and otherwise) to stay afloat in contention for the authority over the Konkan waters. We should keep in mind that he still had, under his possession, the coastal and island forts which had, for long, defied the British and European attempts. He, on the other hand, chose to defy the central command and started behaving in such a haughty manner which allowed his detractors (including the Peshwa) to come together.

The result was disastrous - for not only it spelt doom for Tulaji Angre, but also proved detrimental to the interests and future of the Maratha navy. In the end, it turned out to be a matter of two naval wars in a space of little more than six months that the 'Keels of the Maratha Navy were turned upside down, without much efforts… for ever'. The British fleet, aided by the Peshwa's forces, both - on land as well as on the sea, first targeted the Golden Fort or Suvarnadurg in 1755. The superior strategy of the British in this engagement is borne out by the fact that they had *taken the soundings of the surrounding waters* of the fort so that the location of submerged rocks and depth of the bottom could be ascertained and the bombing/fighting vessels could be strategically placed for the purpose of the battering of the fort walls. At the same time the British could successfully *enforce a complete naval blockade* restricting any chances of reinforcement by Tulaji. From the land side too, a total blockade was enforced by the Peshwa's forces. After carrying out the necessary bombardment, the *troops were landed on the coast* so that Tulaji could be forced to fight on two different fronts. The situation for the garrison of the fort was impossible and it capitulated.

It was proved beyond doubt that *for a coastal fort, unless the surrounding area on the land was under control, it could not withstand a simultaneous and determined attempt from sea as well as land.* The Peshwa's forces were indeed acting against the interests of Tulaji Angre's coastal possessions. They had spread across the Ratnagiri area and had entrenched their position. The fort of Vijaydurg, the headquarters of Tulaji was naturally the next target of the 'allies'. It appeared, from the disposition of the Peshwa's troops in the vicinity of the fort, that the entire action to take over the command of this fort from Tulaji Angre was going to be a mere formality. Though Tulaji had tried to rope in the Portuguese for his cause, it did not work owing to the larger stature of the Peshwa in the Deccan affairs. The vulnerability of Tulaji was clearly visible. To compound the matters for him, two men belonging to the British Royal Squadron - Robert Clive and Admiral Watson, (who were destined to change the entire course of Indian history thereafter), had voluntarily joined the naval expedition on Vijaydurg in commanding capacity, early in 1756.

They formulated a superior naval strategy and went ahead with the principle of 'offensive action'. They started with a *complete naval blockade of the fort and its harbour.* Gradually they *closed in to the fort by sheer art of maneuvering* of their vessels and reached up to the mouth of the river commanding the harbour. A vigorous bombardment was initiated thereafter in such a manner that 'the artillery fire from the 150 English guns gave little chance to that the defenders of the fort as well as the Angre's vessels to match them'. In the process of exchange of fire, a chance shot fell on one of Tulaji's ships in the harbour and it caught fire. The fire spread to the adjoining vessels and within minutes the entire fleet of Tulaji Angre, stationed at his harbour were consumed by fire. This fire, at the same time, also destroyed the prospects of Tulaji and the Maratha navy. Just holding the fort was of no meaning and significance for him. Tulaji, therefore, surrendered and 'spent rest of his life as the prisoner of the Peshwa'. This was the moment of no mean a triumph for the Peshwa as he had 'finally succeeded in destroying the power of a recalcitrant servant of the Maratha state'. At the same time the English also had a reason to rejoice, as this success had removed a big threat (which had bothered them for nearly a century) to their trade on the western coast of India. The Peshwa was too myopic to have realized the larger implications of the fall of Tulaji Angre on the future of Maratha State. The British, as the History suggest, capitalized on this success. They eventually became the political masters of India through a process which was initiated by a naval conquest!

Appendix 1.

ARTICLES BY WHICH THE ENGLISH NATION AND THE SCEDDEES OF JINGERAA HAVE ADJUSTED AN ALLIANCE, DEFENSIVE AND OFFENSIVE ON THE COAST OF INDIA.

(Bombay Castle, December 1733)

For, to establish upon a firm & lasting foundation a perpetual alliance & sincere friendship betwixt the Governments of Jingeera & Bombay, Sceddee Omhar Affaja, Sceddees Massoot & the other principal Sceddees residing in the said Jingeera, have agreed and settled with the Hone Robert Cowan, Esq., President & Gov. for the Hon. English Company & Council -

1. That they shall make a league against all the enemies of both Governments in India (Europeans, subjects of the Kings of Hindostan, Persia, Arabia, & China excepted), and particularly against Angria, both Governments making a vigorous war by sea & land, not regarding any offers of peace from that enemy, & neither of the two allies shall hear alone nor particularly any thing relating to peace unless both are present at the same time any thing is proposed, & are to resolve on nothing without the consent of both Governments.

2. That in case one of the two Governments may have an enemy that is in amity with the other, in such case the league is only to be defensive, & must not fail on any pretence to assist them that are invaded, & in case of any invasion the Government that is in amity with the aggressor shall interpose their good offices as mediators to accommodate the differences that have happened.

3. As to the union of the forces of Bombay & Jingeera in their actions against Angria as well by sea as by land, all the Marine forces of Bombay are to be in conjunction with those of Jingeera, who are to be commanded by their own proper officer, yet he is to act as subordinate to the Chief Commander of the English forces as being more experienced in sea fighting, and the fleet of Bombay of greater force, and as in Bombay there is no more infantry than is sufficient for their garrisons, the necessary land forces are to be provided by the Sceddees of Jingeera.

4. And likewise in case the territories of the Sceddees should be invaded by any power that is an enemy to both Governments, they are to be assisted with all the Marine force of Bombay, and in case that the Gov of Bombay should be invaded by any power that is an enemy to both Gov they shall be assisted from Jingeera with thirty fighting gallivats and two thousand seepoys.

5. That all that is taken in this war by sea by the united forces of both Gov shall be given to the English, and what shall be taken by land shall be given to the Sceddees according as is expressed in the 6 & 7 articles.

6. And if Goa shall be pleased to give this alliance the desire . . . . and that Angria shall be expelled the fort of Candery by the united forces of both Govts, that place shall be given to the English with all ammunition and artillery that shall be found therein, and all the other forts that shall be taken from the said enemy shall be given to the Sceddees with all the ammunition and artillery found in them, except Colabba, which shall be entirely demolished with all its bulwarks & batterys, as one stone shall not be left above another, and shall never be rebuilt with out the consent and pleasure of both Gov and the revenues & produce of the lands annexed to that fort and whatever tribute belongs to it (except Royal grants and possession in the hands of the ancient proprietors) shall be annually and equally divided, half to the English & the other half to the Sceddees of Jingeera, and the care & security of those lands is to be provided for by both.

7. In the place called Mohant, 'twixt the rivers of Nagotana & Penn in the district of Collabba the English may build, if they think proper, a warehouse and small fort with artillery sufficient for the better security of those lands and their roads and the conveniency of merchants trading, putting a garrison therein, and the custom & other rents that shall be recovered shall be annually and equally divided, half to the English and half to the Sceddees of Jingeera, and likewise they shall equally pay the charges of building the fort and its garrison, and both Govts shall take care to encourage it and preserve the subjects.

8. That all the ammunition that shall be expended in this war as well by sea as by land by either of the Gov shall be on their respective accounts, and in case one should be necessitated to take of the other if they can spare it, they are to give it for its just price.

9. If any robberys (robberies) are committed on either side, restitution is immediately to be made to the persons wronged.

10. That deserters who put themselves under the protection of either Gov shall not be delivered if they have committed a crime worthy of death.

11. That the Sceddees of Jingeera upon no pretence hereafter issue out their passes to the shipping or people of Angria.

12. That after Collabba is taken with its dependencies, if it should be attacked by the enemy, the charges of the forces that shall be left for its defence shall be equally defrayed by both Govts.

13. That after the ratification of these articles by which the league is adjusted we are immediately to put them in execution. This tenth day of the month Rajub and the 16th year of His Majesty's reign and 1146 of the law, or the 6 of December 1733.

Khairiyat
Khan's
seal

Abdul
Rehman's
seal

Yakoob
Khan's
seal

Siddi
Sanas
seal

Siddi
Masan's
seal

Siddi
Sambole's
seal

Siddi
Omar's
seal

[Source: Aitchison, C. U., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads, Vol. VII. pp. 134-37]

Appendix 2.

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT SETTLED BY THE HON'BLE RICHARD BOURCHIER ESQ., ON BEHALF OF THE HON'BLE UNITED EAST INDIA COMPANY AND RAMAJIPAMT SUBHEDAR ON BEHALF OF HIS MASTER NANA PANDIT PRADHAN, GENERAL OF THE MARATHAS

(Concluded just prior to the joint attack on Suvarnadurg in 1755)

1st - That all the marine shall be immediately under the command of the English, and the management of all affairs, both by sea and land, carried on by the approbation of both parties.

2nd - Vessels whatever that may be taken from Tulaji, shall be equally divided between the English and Mar except the "Restoration", which is to be the sole property of the English.

3rd - Bankot and Himatgad, with the river belonging thereto, and with five villages to the southward of the said river, to be delivered to the English as the Hon'ble Company's property for ever, and the Marathas not to levy any additional inland duties.

4th - The English engage to keep the sea and prevent Angria's fleet from throwing succour into any place that may be attacked, l at this season only Suvarndurg, Anjanvel and Zoy Vizay (probably Jaigad and Vijaygad).

5th - All ammunition - guns and other stores that may be taken in the several forts in Angria's territories - to belong entirely to the Marathas.

6th - If Manaji's territories are jointly attacked, the fort of Candery, with its harbour, to be delivered unto the Hon'ble Company with the villages Revansa, Ramjankar, Sarall, Shamy, Mandavem, Kolgaon, Donbarem, Kihim, and Avas

7th - Other articles, that may be necessary to be agreed upon, to be settled between the Governor and Nana Pandit Pradhan.

[Source: Forrest G. W., *Maratha Series*, Vol. I, p. 89]

Appendix 3.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS ON BOARD THE "PROTECTOR" FROM THE 22ND MARCH TO THE 27TH APRIL 1755

Saturday, March 22nd March, 1755 : At 4 P.M. made the signal for sailing; at 5 weighed in company of the "Viper", "Swallow" and the Prahm "Triumph"; at 7 anchored for the latter to come up; at 5 anchor weighed; at 6 brought to for the Prahm "Triumph" whose mast was sprung. Sent the carpenters on board her and made sail at 10. Sent Ramaji Purbhu into Chaul with advice to the Maratha fleet of our arrival

Sunday, 23rd March, 1755: At 4 past 3 P.M. saw Angria's fleet, in all 7 top sail vessels and six gallivants; made the signal and gave chase, but could not come up. At 5 made the signal to leave off chase and stood to the northward; at S came to in 6 fathom; at 10 A.M. weighed, hazy weather, the Prahm a long way to leeward; punished James Larkins with 12 lashes for beating a lascar without reason.

Monday, 24th March, 1755: At 7 P.M. came to; at past 5 A.M. the launch carried away her foremast, fixed another and sent her in shore with a Lieutenant to hurry out the Maratha fleet, which were still lying at anchor in Chaul harbour; at 6 weighed, wind South by West.

Tuesday, 25th March, 1755: At 1 P.M lay to for the Maratha fleet and at 2 they joined us, consisting of I grabs, about 40 gallivats, and two batellás. Made sail to the southward. At 6, came in to Comoray Bay. Sent the boats to sound round; found it clear, good holding ground, and the point may be brought N.W. in ¼ less 5 fathom, and small vessels may bring it West in 1 fathom.

Wednesday, 26th March, 1755.—At 6 A.M. made the signal and weighed in company as before and at 12 anchored in Shreverdan (Shrivardhan) Bay much less than the other. The north point of that may be brought to W.N.W. in 3 fathom, and small vessels may lay sheltered from the westerly winds.

Thursday, 27th March, 1755: Nothing remarkable, winds northerly, sounded round the Bay, & the fort.

Friday, 28th March, 1755: Fair weather, hove the anchor up, saw it clear, and let it go again.

Saturday, 29th March, 1755: At 6 p. m. made the signal and weighed, but failing calm came to again. At 10 weighed, 6 grabs and 12 gallivat, and made sail towards Suvarndurg in hope of intercepting Tulaji's grabs that we had an account were in there. At 5 A.M. saw seven sail of his grabs and 10 gallivats coming out of Suvarndurg; made the general signal to chase to the south-east; repeated it several times till observed. At 10 A.M. being little wind set in we came up with them fast. They then set a number of small sails, steering sails, &c., and we observed them heaving out all their ballast. All the fleet a long way astern and we continued to go from them. We were within random shot of some of the grabs.

Sunday, 30th March, 1755: Still chasing to the southward. Gained by little on the grabs, and all the fleet dropt astern of us prodigiously. Made signal to leave off chase. Hauled our wind to the northward at 6 P.M. Came to; made signals for all commanders at 10. Made the signal and weighed with the flood. Made the "Swallow's" signal to take the Prahm in tow at noon. No land in sight, 32 fathom water, latitude observed 17. 48 North.

Monday, 31st March, 1755: Pleasant gales and fair weather. At 8 P.M. came to off Suvarndurg, distant from shore 3 miles. Found here 6 of the Maratha grabs and a number of gallivats.

Tuesday, April 1st, I755: Weighed and run further in; anchored in less five fathom, off shore one mile. In the evening sent the "Viper" and the Prahm "Triumph" within us with orders to begin throwing off shells, but observing they fell short, left off till morning.

Wednesday, 2nd April 1755: Winds and fair weather, weighed and run further in with the "Viper" and "Triumph" Came to in 4 fathom, being then about half flood. At 8 we began to cannonade and they to bombard the fort. They firing pretty briskly at us from their bastions, but without doing any damage. In the night having a large swell and the success of shells or shot uncertain left off, and by a deserter had an account that the Governor and eight people were killed, but that the side of the fort on which we lay being nothing but large rocks it would be impossible to make a breach in it. At low water had but 3 fathom, warped further off.

Thursday, 3rd April, 1755: Hazy weather; saw the Grab "Bombay" three ships and one snow, in the offing standing to the northward. At 9 weighed and ran in within half musket shot of Suvarndurg fort in 3 fathom. Made the general signal to engage. Got a spring on each side of the cable, and began to fire the lower deck guns at fort Gova and the upper deck at Suvarndurg. By 11 o'clock we had pretty well silenced both, from which time till night they only fired a gun now and then. Sent officers and people to make the Maratha grabs come into a proper line for engaging, but could not prevail on them to come nearer than within random shot of the forts. The "Viper" "Triumph" and "Launch" threw a great number of shells, one of which set fire to the magazine in the large fort, which blew up a quantity of powder and a general conflagration ensued. Continued engaging till night; then left off, having fired 640 shot. The north-west winds blowing fresh with a large swell, and we having only a foot more water than the ship drew, got down top gallant yards and spirit sail yard, &c., and hove further off.

Friday, 4th April, 1755: Day-light veered in again and renewed our firing as did the ketches and launches with their mortars and coehorns with such success as almost ruined the north-east bastion of the large fort, knocking down the parapet and great part of the wall, &c. At 10 three of the forts struck their colours, on which, sent Lieutenant Young on shore with English flags, which were hoisted, manned ship and gave three cheers. In the after noon, weighed and run off into 5 ½ fathom, where anchored.

Saturday, 5th April 1755: At 10 in the morning, I went ashore by Ramaji Pant's desire as he would not enter the forts before me. We found them greatly injured by the shot and shell and a number of houses burnt.

Sunday, 6th April, 1755: In the morning fired some shots, etc. at Suvarndurg Forts which obstinately held out till noon, when they struck their colours and we hoisted English.

Monday, 7th April, 1755: In the morning sent some gang casks for water by the Maratha fishing boats, hove into a half cable; employed making nippers; loosed sails to dry.

Tuesday, 8th April, 1755: Received on board some water which stowed in the ground tier.

Wednesday, 9th April, 1755: Nothing remarkable; received on board water.

Thursday, 10th April, 1755: Receiving of water; the people making mats.

Friday, 11th April, 1755: Weighed the small lower anchor and anchored with the stream in the same place. Here the tide flows near 2 fathom up and down and on full, and change 10 O'clock, latitude 180 north at 17.56 on a medium.

Saturday, 12th April, 1755: Employed fleeting ship on both sides and scrubbing the bends; saw a shibar in the offing going to the northward and sent an officer in the pinnace on board her, but she not observing the boat fired a shot at her to bring her to. Found her to be a Maratha boat from Ratnagiri bound to Chaul, who had seen nothing in her way.

Sunday, 13th April, I755: Remarkable; saw the anchor clear, and let it go again.

Monday, 14th April, 1755: At 7 this morning Ramaji came on board as likewise the Governor of Chaul. Saluted him with 5 guns and at their going away with 7 guns. At noon weighed with the wind as W by W. Made sail towards D in company with the "Swallow", "Viper" and Prahm. The Maratha fleet at Suvarndurg, but promised to follow us immediately.

Tuesday, 15th April 1755: At 5 P.M. came to, off Dabul in 7 fathom. Tide flows here much the same as at Suvarndurg. This is a large fort and appears strong, as also another large black fort upon the hill with a ditch round it, besides several little towers near the water side. It lays in 17.40 North. We were much nearer than point blank shot, but they did not fire at us.

Wednesday, 16th April, 1755: At 4 P.M. the phattemar boat arrived from Bombay with orders. Made the signal to call in all cruisers from the north-east, having stationed the "Swallow" and "Viper" there to stop up the harbour. At 9 weighed and at 1 A.M. came to in 8 fathom. At 5 A.M. made the signal and weighed in company of the "Swallow", "Viper" and Prahm.

Thursday, 17th April, 1755: At 2 P.M. came to off Suvarndurg with the stream anchor in 5 fathom; sent the launch on shore for water. Found here all the Maratha fleet who had not weighed from hence.

Friday, 18th April, 1755: Fresh gales of wind at north-west; in the evening got down top gallant yards and veered away a whole cable.

Saturday, 19th April, 1755: Moderate winds for the first part; hove into a cable; the launch returned with water; sent her on shore again for water. Shifted the top gallant masts and got up short ones in the evening. Blowing fresh, veered out the long service.

Sunday, 20th April, 1755: Got up the top gallant yards and made the signal for sailing. At 12 at night weighed and stood to the northward,

Monday 21st April 1755: At 6 a.m., a boat came on board from Ramaji Pant to beg to delay a day or two or till he had settled the garrison properly. Bore and stood to the southward. Made the "Swallow" and Prahm signals to anchor as they would be so much in our way. At 8 came to off Suvarndurg, Sent the launch on shore for water and an officer to Ramaji Pant.

Tuesday, 22nd April 1755: Ramaji Pant sent me a memorial and an earnest request to go to the southward to assist Samsher Bahadur (Peshwa's brother) in his attack upon Ratnágiri, as also for a security to the Maratha fleet who were gone there, which being inconsistent with my orders, I could not comply with. At noon he came on board. Saluted him with 9 guns. He gave to each soldier and gunner Rs, 5 and to each lascar and topass one rupee; besides turbans, silver bangles, etc. to some particular persons, and left an order for Rs. 1,500 to be distributed among the ship's company in proportion to their stations; gold bangles to the Commanders of the other vessels and Rs, 2,000 to be divided among their crews. At his going away - manned ship, and saluted him with the like number of guns. At past 4 P.M. weighed. At 8 the flood being done **(i.e., the use of tide)** came to in 5 fathom. At 12 weighed with a light land breeze.

Wednesday, 23rd April, 1755: At 3 P.M. came up with the "Swallow" who cast off the Prahm. Then she bore down and took her in tow. At 11 P.M., came to with the stream anchor.

Thursday, 24th April, 1755: At 4 A.M. weighed and at half past 10 came to with the stream anchor in 7 fathom, off shore 4 or 5 leagues. At 2 made the signal and weighed, and at 9 came to with the stream anchor in 6 fathom, off shore 3 or 4 miles.

Friday, 25th April 1755: At 3 P.M. made the signal and weighed. John Smitter, soldier, departed this life at 2 P.M. The Prahm "Triumph" carried away her main topmast. At 12 came to with stream anchor in 11 fathom water.

Saturday, 26th April 1755: At 6 A.M. weighed and at 3 P.M. came to with stream anchor in 6 fathom, off shore 4 or 5 miles. At 6 made the signal and weighed. At 11 came to off Candery in 5 ½ fathom.

Sunday 27th April 1755: At 5 A.M. made the signal and weighed. At 12 came to in Bombay in 7 fathom water with the former vessels in company.

[Source: Forrest G. W., *Maratha Series*, Vol. I, pp. 98-101]

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